MONDAY
March 27, 2023

BENGALURU
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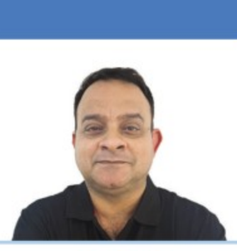

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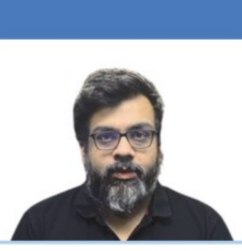

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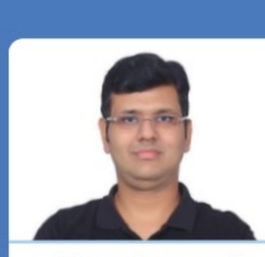

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Current Affairs

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*Source: The Indian Edtech Story, Q1 2022 Round-Up by Markelytics

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CLOSE CALL

Air India flight in near miss over Kathmandu

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COMMERCIAL LAUNCH

ISRO puts 36 satellites into orbit

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KHALISTAN PROTESTERS

Separatists attempt to incite violence in U.S.

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THE RAHUL GANDHI CASE

Making sense of the MP's disqualification

Criminal defamation law needs review

EDITORIAL » PAGE 6

DOUBLE DELIGHT

Nikhat and Lovlina on top of the world

SPORT » PAGE 13

Net direct tax growth for 2022-23 to slow to 15%

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

India's net direct tax collections growth, which stood at about 17% for 2022-23 by early March, is expected to moderate to 15% for the full financial year, a top Finance Ministry official told *The Hindu*.

The government's net receipts from direct taxes had grown about 49% in 2021-22 to almost ₹14.09 lakh crore.

The sharp growth was attributable to the economy's gradual recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic lockdowns that had hit economic activity in the previous year.

Inflows of direct taxes had risen almost 20% as of mid-December 2022, but each successive month has recorded a slight slowdown in the growth rate.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

Cong. holds satyagraha; MPs, MLAs to wear black today

Party leaders link Rahul Gandhi's disqualification to his questioning of the Adani Group and its political affiliations, while Priyanka invokes her father's martyrdom and calls PM a 'coward'

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

The Congress held protests across the country on Sunday, with its leaders in various States linking Rahul Gandhi's disqualification from the Lok Sabha to his unrelenting questioning of the Adani Group and its alleged links to the ruling party.

In a day-long Sankalp Satyagraha, Congress leaders said the party's campaign for a Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) investigation of the Adani Group and its linkages would continue. Lawmakers from the party will attend Parliament and the Assemblies wearing black clothes on Monday.

Mr. Gandhi did not join the protest in Delhi, where his sister and Congress general secretary, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra, launched a scathing attack against the Bharatiya Janata Party government at the Centre. Claiming that the country's democracy had been nurtured by the blood of her family, Ms. Vadra asked why the entire government machinery had come together to protect one businessman, who has thousands of crores of rupees in shell companies. Calling Prime Minister Narendra Modi a "coward", she challenged the government to send her to jail.

"Who is this Adani? You are giving away the country's wealth to him. He has thousands of crores in shell companies. You can't even order an inquiry against him? The entire government gets rattled by his name," Ms. Vadra said.

She said that her father had been insulted in Parliament. "The son of the martyr was called 'Mir Jafar'. BJP's CM asks who is his father? PM raises questions on 'Nehru surname' in Parliament? There is no case against you, your membership is not cancelled," she said.

Earlier, the Congress alleged that the Delhi Police had denied permission for the protest. A senior police officer said Section 144 of the CrPC (prohibiting assembly of more than four persons) is always imposed around Rajghat.

In solidarity: Mallikarjun Kharge, K.C. Venugopal and Priyanka Gandhi Vadra at the Rajghat in New Delhi. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

EPFO subscribers are 'captive investors' of two Adani stocks

Vikas Dhoot
NEW DELHI

The aftermath of the Hindenburg Research report may have made several large investors rethink their exposures to the Adani group. However, one large pool of capital has continued to invest in two Adani stocks, including flagship Adani Enterprises, and will keep doing so till at least September, unless its trustees rethink their investment approach when they meet this week.

These investments are being made by India's largest retirement fund – the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) – which manages the nest eggs of 27.73 crore formal sector employees and invests 15% of its corpus into exchange traded funds (ETFs) linked to the NSE Nifty 50 and the BSE Sensex.

The second largest non-banking financial institution after the Life Insurance Corporation of India earmarks up to 85% of its equity investments into ETFs tracking the Nifty 50, which had added Adani Enterprises last September and has retained the stock for another six months for the period starting from March 30 this year.

The EPFO earmarks up to 85% of its equity investments into ETFs tracking the Nifty 50.

CONTINUED ON
» PAGE 8

NEARBY

UVCE struggles to stay afloat

BENGALURU
The State government has given autonomous status to the University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering. However, with no adequate funding, UVCE is struggling to stay afloat. » Page 3

Quota matrix triggers sparks

BENGALURU
The politics of reservation ahead of elections intensified on Sunday as the Congress and JD(S) traded barbs with the BJP over allocation of quota for Veerashaiva-Lingayats and Vokkaligas by withdrawing 4% reservation to Muslims.

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EDUCATIONPLUS » PAGE 5

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Text&Context

THE HINDU

NEWS IN NUMBERS

The number of farmers who received claims under PMFBY

12.37 In crore. Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar informed Parliament that for every ₹100 of premium paid by farmers under the flagship Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) scheme, they have received about ₹514 as claims. PTI

The number of projects completed under the WIF scheme

5,642 projects. About ₹9,393.68 crore funds have been sanctioned under the Warehouse Infrastructure Fund (WIF) scheme till December 2022, to establish 7,953 warehouse projects across 21 States, the Agriculture Minister informed. PTI

The number of malnourished children in February

43 In lakh. Of the 5.6 crore children measured, 7.7% were malnourished, Women and Child Development Minister Smriti Irani informed Parliament. She added that while Meghalaya reported the highest share of stunting at 46.5%, Bihar had the highest level of underweight children (41%). PTI

The projects sanctioned under the Sagarmala programme

70 projects. Union Ports, Shipping and Waterways Minister Sarbananda Sonowal added that the projects were sanctioned for the development of coastal berths, roll-on, roll-off, passenger jetties etc. and that 15 projects worth ₹849 crore have already been completed. PTI

The respiratory infection cases which were due to H3N2

50 In percentage. The Minister of State for Health Bharati Pravin Pawar informed Parliament that 1,161 cases of H3N2, a subtype of seasonal influenza virus, were reported between January 1 and March 20, 2023 in the country. PTI

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Understanding IMF bailouts

Why are Sri Lanka and Pakistan facing major macroeconomic risks? How does currency devaluation and price rise affect an economy? What is the International Monetary Fund? Why does the IMF impose certain conditions before lending money to countries?

EXPLAINER

Prashanth Perumal

The story so far:

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) last week confirmed a $3 billion bailout plan for Sri Lanka's struggling economy. IMF officials are also in negotiations with Pakistan for a $1.1 billion bailout plan as the country faces a severe economic crisis marked by a falling currency and price rise.

Why do nations seek an IMF bailout?

Countries seek help from the IMF usually when their economies face a major macroeconomic risk, mostly in the form of a currency crisis. For instance in the case of Sri Lanka and Pakistan, both countries have witnessed domestic prices rise rapidly and the exchange value of their currencies drop steeply against the U.S. dollar. Such currency crises are generally the result of gross mismanagement of the nation's currency by its central bank, often under the covert influence of the ruling government. Central banks may be forced by governments to create fresh money out of thin air to fund populist spending. Such spending eventually results in a rapid rise of the overall money supply, which in turn causes prices to rise across the economy and the exchange value of the currency to drop. A rapid, unpredictable fall in the value of a currency can destroy confidence in said currency and affect economic activity as people may turn hesitant to accept the currency in exchange for goods and services. Foreigners may also be unwilling to invest in an economy where the value of its currency gyrates in an unpredictable manner. In such a scenario, many countries are forced to seek help from the IMF to meet their external debt and other obligations, to purchase essential imports, and also to prop up the exchange value of their currencies. Meanwhile, a country's domestic economic policies can also have an adverse impact on its currency's exchange rate and foreign exchange reserves. For example, economic policy that imperils productivity can affect a country's ability to attract the necessary foreign exchange for its survival. Bad luck can also contribute to a crisis. In the case of Sri Lanka, a decrease in foreign tourists visiting the country led to a steep fall in the flow of U.S. dollars into the nation.

Money matters: A vendor arranges his vegetables at a market in Colombo on March 21, 2023.AFP

How does the IMF help countries?

The IMF basically lends money, often in the form of special drawing rights (SDRs), to troubled economies that seek the lender's assistance. SDRs simply represent a basket of five currencies, namely the U.S. dollar, the euro, the Chinese yuan, the Japanese yen, and the British pound. The IMF carries out its lending to troubled economies through a number of lending programs such as the extended credit facility, the flexible credit line, the stand-by agreement, etc. Countries receiving the bailout can use the SDRs for various purposes depending on their individual circumstances. Currently, both Sri Lanka and Pakistan are in urgent need for U.S. dollars to import essential items and also to pay their foreign debt. So any money that they receive from the IMF is likely to go towards addressing these urgent issues.

The IMF was set up in 1945 out of the Bretton Woods conference. The primary goal of the IMF back then was to bring about international economic coordination to prevent competing currency devaluation by countries trying to promote their own exports. Eventually, the IMF evolved to be a lender of last resort to governments of countries that had to deal with severe currency crises.

Are there any strings attached to an IMF bailout?

The IMF usually imposes conditions on countries before it lends any money to them. For example, a country may have to agree to implement certain structural reforms as a condition to receive IMF loans. The IMF's conditional lending has been controversial as many believe that these reforms are too tough on the public. Some have also accused the IMF's lending decisions, which are taken by officials appointed by the governments of various countries, to be influenced by international politics. Supporters of the IMF's lending policies, however, have argued that conditions are essential for the success of IMF lending. For one, countries that seek an IMF bailout are usually in a crisis due to certain policies adopted by their governments that turned out to be inimical to economic growth and stability. It may thus not make sense for the IMF to throw money at a country when the policies that caused its crisis remain untouched. So, for instance, the IMF may demand a country affected by high price inflation to ensure the independence of its central bank. Corruption is another issue. The IMF lending to troubled economies, may turn out to be a wasted effort because these economies have poor institutions and suffer from high corruption. In other words, these countries are most likely to squander the bailout money.

THE GIST

- The IMF last week confirmed a $3 billion bailout plan for Sri Lanka's struggling economy. IMF officials are also in negotiations with Pakistan for a $1.1 billion bailout plan.
- Both countries have witnessed domestic prices rise rapidly and the exchange value of their currencies drop steeply against the U.S. dollar. Such currency crises are generally the result of gross mismanagement of the nation's currency by its central bank, often under the covert influence of the ruling government.
- The IMF carries out its lending to troubled economies through a number of lending programs such as the extended credit facility, the flexible credit line, the stand-by agreement, etc.

Why has the T.N. government decided to merge schools?

Which schools run by different departments of the Tamil Nadu government are going to be merged with the school education department? What are the concerns with the merger?

Pon Vasanth B.A

The story so far:

A major announcement in Tamil Nadu's budget for 2023-24 was that the schools run by different departments for so long to cater to specific needs will be merged with the School Education (SE) department. The announcement has evoked mixed reactions from civil society.

What are these schools?

While the government is yet to spell out finer details, the budget announcement indicated that the schools run by the Adi Dravidar and Tribal Welfare (ADTW), Backward Classes, Most Backward Classes, and Denotified Communities Welfare (BCW), Welfare of the Differently-abled Persons (WPD), Forest, and Hindu Religious and Charitable Endowments (HR&CE) departments will be merged.

These departments run 1,834 schools with roughly 1.6 lakh students on their rolls. The ADTW department alone accounts for 80% of these schools (1,466) and students (1.26 lakh). Within the ADTW department, there are 1,138 Adi Dravidar Welfare schools. The remaining 328 are Government Tribal Residential (GTR) and Eklavya Model Residential Schools, run mainly for Scheduled Tribes (ST). The BCW runs 295 schools, HR&CE runs 32, WPD 22, and the forest department 19. These schools, especially those run by ADTW and BCW departments, were created to focus on education for marginalised sections. For instance, the Adi Dravidar schools have their origins in the British Raj. They were created with the support of the labour department for the "Depressed Classes (as the Scheduled Castes were then referred)," who were denied education elsewhere. They were then moved to the Social Welfare department and later to ADTW, when it was created. Similarly, the BCW runs the Kallar reclamation schools, which have their origins before Independence. They were created, mainly for the Piramalai Kallar community, who faced marginalisation due to the draconian Criminal Tribes Act brought by the British.

Why are they being merged?

The budget mentioned that the schools will be merged to "achieve the goal of social justice," "improve the quality of schools" and to ensure "quality education for all". The relatively poor quality of these schools, especially those run by ADTW and BCW departments, have long been a concern. Their infrastructure is below par and a lot of teaching posts are vacant. Another key reason, although not officially acknowledged in the budget, was the caste identifier in the names of the schools run by ADTW and BCW departments. In Tamil Nadu, Adi Dravidar refers to the SCs. Similarly, the names Kallar Reclamation and GTR refer to specific communities.

The argument by a section is that the caste identifiers, especially in case of Adi Dravidar welfare schools, result in the students feeling isolated and prevent those from other communities joining these schools in more numbers. While there was a need in the past for such schools as these communities did not have access to education elsewhere, they argue that with the situation being improved, these schools were now resulting in "ghettoisation".

What are the concerns?

While there seems to be a broad agreement that the poor quality of these schools need to be addressed, there is concern over the merger being projected as the magic bullet. The discussion has focused on the ADTW department for many factors, including its higher share of schools, higher budget, and historic and political context. Many have highlighted that the schools were in poor shape due to prolonged negligence and widespread irregularities. Merging the schools without addressing these issues would only result in them being denied the special focus they deserve by the SE department which is huge. With successive T.N. governments already blamed for reduced spending under the SC and Tribal Sub Plans, there is concern that the merger will result in further diversion of funds. Importantly, many are surprised that such an announcement has been made without consultations with the stakeholders concerned.

THE GIST

- In Tamil Nadu's budget for 2023-24, it was announced that the schools run by different departments for so long to cater to specific needs will be merged with the School Education (SE) department.
- The budget mentioned that the schools will be merged to "achieve the goal of social justice," "improve the quality of schools" and to ensure "quality education for all".
- Many have highlighted that the schools are in poor shape due to prolonged negligence and widespread irregularities. Merging the schools without addressing these issues would result in them being denied the special focus they deserve.

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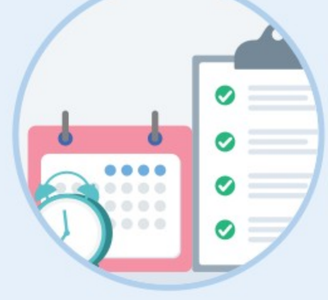

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Commuters throng K.R. Pura-Whitefield metro line

The newly inaugurated Whitefield station of Namma Metro.
K. MURALI KUMAR

While some were there for the experience of the metro ride, others wanted to see how long it took to travel to their workplaces near Whitefield

Jahnavi T.R.
BENGALURU

The metro stations between Whitefield and K.R. Pura turned into picnic spots on Sunday as commercial operations began on the new stretch of the Purple Line, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on March 25. Although the crowd was sparse during the morning hours, as the day went by, the number of passengers began to increase.

On day 1, the stretch recorded a ridership of 16,319 till 6 p.m.

Being a weekend, most of the commuters were there for the "metro experience", while some others were calculating how much time it would take for them to reach their workplaces near Whitefield. Many took selfies and videos inside the trains and near the name boards at stations.

"The metro will help us get to the city centre and enable us to explore restaurants and malls on the other side of the town," said Manasa, a nursing student. However, commuters said their concern was the missing link between Baiyappanahalli and K.R. Pura stations. "I am here with my family only to show my children what the metro is. It'll be truly useful only when we get direct connectivity to Baiyyappanahalli and hence, to Majestic," said Veera Sundar, a resident of Udaya Nagar near K.R. Pura.

Several commuters said the travel time to other parts of the city would be cut down by 50%.

Auto drivers demand extra money

Many commuters said that the autorickshaw drivers were demanding exorbitant amounts for the distance between K.R. Pura and Baiyappanahalli.

"On online auto hiring apps, the price was just ₹50 between the two stations, whereas auto drivers were demanding ₹120-150 for the same distance. Even for a share auto, they were demanding ₹50-60 per passenger," said Prakruthi J., a commuter at Baiyyappanahalli metro station.

Timings
BENGALURU

MONDAY, MAR. 27
RISE 06:19 SET 18:31
RISE 10:30 SET 23:50

TUESDAY, MAR. 28
RISE 06:19 SET 18:31
RISE 11:21 SET 00:00

WEDNESDAY, MAR. 29
RISE 06:18 SET 18:31
RISE 12:13 SET 00:43

Bengaluru Weather	max	min
Tumakuru	32	25
Mysuru	35	21
Bengaluru	33	22

Bengaluru Today
33°C A mostly dry weather to continue. Morning will be pleasant with mist and haze. Day will be warm.

Bengaluru Tomorrow
34°C A warm and humid weather to prevail. Night will remain pleasant. Spell of thunderstorm with gusty winds may occur.

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THE HINDU
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Delay in white-topping work leads to chaos in surrounding areas

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

It has been over a year since key connecting roads in East Bengaluru were dug up and traffic diversions enforced for white-topping work. With no end in sight for the much delayed work, residents of Indiranagar, Ulsoor and surrounding areas are fed up with traffic from K.R. Puram and even outstation traffic being diverted into their residential bylanes, choking them.

The Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) has undertaken white-topping work on 100 Feet Road and Chinmaya Mission Hospital (CMH) Road, both busy stretches connecting several areas in East Bengaluru with the central parts. Earlier, Old Madras Road was closed for construction of the Rapid Road in the 350-metre-long stretch which had led to traffic bottlenecks in Indiranagar and now the white-topping continues to trouble the motorists.

"Since white-topping work is going on the main roads, vehicles are moving to the interior residential roads, which is also leading to traffic snarls in bylanes and disturbing the peace of residential pockets. The work has been in progress for nearly one year and it is causing chaos in Indiranagar," complained Shankar Prasad, a resident of the area. "For the last several months, white-topping has been causing severe traffic snarls on Old Madras Road and Indiranagar. Many buses from K.R. Puram are entering the roads of Indiranagar and Ulsoor which have become difficult to ride," said Rajiv P.K., a motorist from HAL who takes this stretch to reach M.G. Road everyday.

Residents also blamed the BBMP for not completing the white-topping projects in-time. "The civic body is not paying enough attention to our plight. White-topping was not at all necessary on this stretch as the road was in good condition earlier. This project is only leading to trouble for the general public," Mr. Rajiv added.

Meanwhile, traffic police have also been appealing to the civic body to complete work at the earliest. "The delay in the works is causing huge traffic snarls in the area and has a snowball effect in surrounding areas too. We are also requesting them to complete the project soon so that the traffic issue can be solved," a senior official from the area said. However, BBMP officials said that work was nearing completion and will be completed soon. "Most of the work is done and in a few more days the road will be opened to motorists," a BBMP official from East Division said.

Four, including two students, arrested, drugs seized in separate cases

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The Madanayakanahalli police on Sunday arrested a gang of three including two students from Kerala for allegedly peddling drugs to college students on the outskirts of the city. Based on a tip-off, a team raided the place close to Acharya College and arrested Anuprith Salin, 23, his associate Vinayan, 21, and cab driver Raghu, 29, and allegedly recovered the drugs from them.

The accused Anuprith and Vinayan, from Kerala, came to the city to study and were allegedly addicted to drugs. They started peddling drugs and roped in cab driver Raghu too. The trio would source the drugs from a Nigerian national and sell it to their customers, a majority of them college students, a police officer said. The police have registered a case under NDPS Act, 1985, against the trio and efforts are on to track down their network and the Nigerian national who was supplying the drugs to them.

In a similar incident, the Nelamangala Rural Police arrested truck driver Saleem Pasha and recovered 10.3 kg of drugs worth ₹2.5 lakh from him. The accused was waiting near Anand Nagar Cross in the outskirts to deliver the consignment when a team of police based on a tip-off arrested Saleem and recovered the drugs. The accused confessed that he was sourcing the drugs from his contact from Odisha and selling it to his clients in the city.

Government of Karnataka
Office of The Executive Engineer,
Panchayat Raj Engineering Division, Haveri
Email : eeprednhvr@gmail.com Tel. No: 08375-232454
No.EE/PREDn/HVR/PB-2/Tender/2022-23/7440 Dt:21-03-2023

E-Procurement Short Time Tender Notification No.74/2022-23

The Panchayath Raj Engineering Department through Executive Engineer Panchayath Raj Engineering Division Haveri on behalf of Governor of Karnataka invites the E-Portal Tender as per KW-2,3&4 from the eligible and approved Contractors registered with P.W.D registered for e-Procurement for each of the following works **All head of account** work as follows. Details can also be obtained in www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in
(1) Construction of new Building to AEE, PRE Sub Division, & AEE RWS&S Division Haveri **(INDENT101922)** (2) Improvements to road from Hosur to aratal-Basavanakappa join road in shiggaon taluk **(INDENT100506)(ST)** (3) Improvements to road from Hanakanahalli - Bommanahalli road in Shiggaon taluk **(INDENT101627)** (4) Improvements to road from A M koppa - Shilavantsomapur road in Shiggaon Taluk **(INDENT100500)**
(1) Last date for uploading completed tender form And documents e-procurement documents through online : **28-03-2023** upto 4.00 PM (2) Date of Technical bid opening (if possible) : **29-03-2023** @ 5.00 PM (3) Date of Financial bid Opening (if possible) : **31-03-2023** @ 11.00 AM
More details can be had from the office of the undersigned and also through our website http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in by clicking List of Tenders which will link to all Dept. works list.
DIPR/HVR/KSMCA/674/2022-23
Sd/- Executive Engineer, P.R.E. Division, Haveri

Form No. INC-26
[Pursuant to rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014]
Advertisement to be published in the newspaper for change of registered office of the company from one state to another
Before the Central Government, South-East Region
In the matter of sub section (4) of Section 13 of Companies Act, 2013 and clause (a) of sub rule (5) of rule 30 of the Companies (Incorporation) Rules, 2014
AND
In the matter of **Red Brick Lane Marketing Solutions Private Limited** having its registered office at 6th Floor, Salapuria Sattva Magnificia, Near Tin Factory, Old Madras Road, Bangalore- 560016
....Petitioner

Notice is hereby given to the General Public that the Company proposes to make application to the Central Government under Sections 13 of the Companies Act, 2013, seeking confirmation of alteration of the Memorandum of Association of the Company in terms of the Special Resolution passed at the Extra Ordinary General Meeting held on 24th February 2023 to enable the Company to change its Registered Office from State of Karnataka to Union Territory /National Capital Territory of Delhi.

Any person whose interest is likely to be affected by the proposed change of the registered office of the company may d**eliver either on the MCA-21 portal (www.mca.gov.in) by filing investor complaint form** or cause to be delivered or send by registered post of his/her objections supported by an affidavit stating the nature of his/her interest and grounds of opposition to the Regional Director, South-East Region, 3rd Floor, Corporate Bhavan, Bandlaguda, Nagole, Tattiannaram Village, Hayat Nagar Mandal, Ranga Reddy District, Hyderabad-500068, Telangana within fourteen days of the date of publication of this notice with a copy to the Petitioner Company at its Registered Office as the address mentioned below:

Red Brick Lane Marketing Solutions Private Limited
Address: 6th Floor, Salapuria Sattva Magnificia, Near Tin Factory, Old Madras Road, Bangalore- 560016.

For and on behalf of
Red Brick Lane Marketing Solutions Private Limited
Sd/-
Deepak Kumar Baid
Director
DIN: 05150983
Address: K-1202, Brigade Metropolis, ITPL Main Road,Bangalore-560048, Karnataka, India

Date : 27.03.2023
Place : Bengaluru

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The State Farming Corporation of Kerala Ltd.
Punalur, Kollam, Ph : 9188292251
E-mail:sfcksales@gmail.com

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PERSONAL

CHANGE OF NAME

I Sudheer Ranga P R alias Sudheer Ranga Penikelapati Ranganna S/o Ranganna Penikelapati Chinna, residing at D.No. 34, 2nd Line, GTM Quarters, Subramanyapura, Bengaluru, Karnataka - 560061, have changed my name to Sudheer Ranga Penikelapati for all purposes in future

LEGAL NOTICE

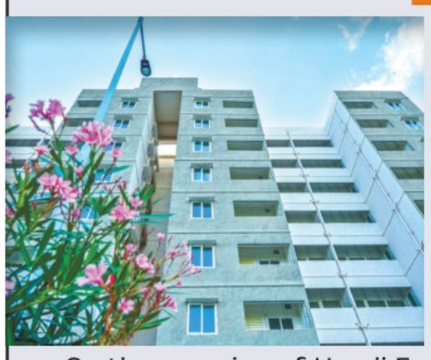
NOTICE
IN THE COURT OF HONOURABLE ADDITIONAL SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE: NARASARAOPET (PALNADU DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH)
OS No. 24/2022
Between:
1) Gade Chitralekha
2) Gade Usha ...Plaintiffs
Vs
1) Gade Krishnaveni (D1)
2) Gade Manohara Sharma (D2)
3) Parvathi Rama Swamy (D3)
...Defendants
TO
1) Gade Manohara Sharma, S/o.Late Gade Venkata Krishna Rao, Hindu, Aged about 61 years, Corporate Employee.
2) Parvathi Rama Swamy, W/o.Gade Manohara Sharma, Hindu, Aged about 62 years, Corporate Employee.
Both are Residents of Sterling Apartments, No. 80, R.M.V, 2nd Stage, Dollars Colony, Bangalore, Karnataka State.
The Plaintiffs herein, filed the suit against both of you and one Gade Krishnaveni (D1), for the relief of Partition of Hindu Undivided Joint Family Property and both of you, in spite of several notices in the above Suit in OS No. 24/2022, through Hon'ble Court and Regd. Post, avoided to take the Notices and the Hon'ble Court Ordered Notice to both of you through the Substitute Service of Notice, by way of this Publication.
Both of you take notice and appear before the Hon'ble Court on 17-04-2023, either in person or through Advocate or else, the matter will be decided by the Hon'ble Court in your absence.
PIDUGU RAVI SANKAR
Advocate
for Petitioners/Plaintiffs.
Cell: 79893 17577
Bangalore, Date: 27-03-2023

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE
IN THE COURT OF HONOURABLE ADDITIONAL SENIOR CIVIL JUDGE: NARASARAOPET (PALNADU DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH)
IA No. 126 /2022 IN OS No. 24/2022
Between:
1) Gade Chitralekha
2) Gade Usha
...Petitioners/Plaintiffs
Vs
1) Gade Manohara Sharma (D2)
2) Parvathi Rama Swamy (D3)
.... Respondents/Defendants
TO
1) Gade Manohara Sharma, S/o.Late Gade Venkata Krishna Rao, Hindu, Aged about 61 years, Corporate Employee.
2) Parvathi Rama Swamy, W/o Gade Manohara Sharma, Hindu, Aged about 62 years, Corporate Employee.
Both are Residents of Sterling Apartments, No. 80, R.M.V, 2nd Stage, Dollars Colony, Bangalore, Karnataka State.
The Petitioners/Plaintiffs herein, filed the suit, against both of you and one Gade Krishnaveni (D1), for the relief of Partition of Hindu Undivided Joint Family Property and both of you, in spite of several notices in the above IA No. 126/2022 in OS No. 24/2022, through Hon'ble Court and Regd. Post, avoided to take the Notices and the Hon'ble Court Ordered Notice to both of you through the Substitute Service of Notice, by way of this Publication.
Both of you take notice and appear before the Hon'ble Court on 17-04-2023, either in person or through Advocate or else, the matter will be decided by the Hon'ble Court in your absence.
PIDUGU RAVI SANKAR
Advocate
for Petitioners/Plaintiffs.
Cell: 79893 17577
Bangalore, Date: 27-03-2023

BDA is offering discounts
on the rates for the flats at
Kaniminike Housing Project

Sri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister



On the occasion of Ugadi Festival, BDA is offering discounts on the flats built at Kaniminike

2 BHK Flats
BDA is offering 10% for 2 BHK flats pertaining to Phase-2 and Phase-3 of Kaniminike Housing Project

3 BHK Flats
BDA is offering 5% for 3 BHK flats pertaining to Phase-4 of Kaniminike Housing Project

Offer valid from 20.03.2023 to 30.06.2023

Sri S.R. Vishwanth, Hon'ble Chairman, BDA and MLA, Yelahanka Assembly Constituency,
Sri G. Kumar Naik, IAS, Commissioner, BDA &
Dr. A. Lokesh, KSAS, Finance Member, BDA participating in a programme.

The interested public can obtain more information from Assistant Commissioner (Flats) at BDA Head Office. BDA requests the public to utilize this offer, as this offer is for a limited period up to 30.06.2023.

For further details visit www.housing.bdabangalore.org
For Flat Allotment queries : 8884138555
For online queries: 93533 23821, Engineer: 99864 99165

Bangalore Development Authority
T. Chowdaiah Road, Kumara Park West, Bengaluru - 560 020.

CACHE

Mounting problem: Students play amid plastic wastes generated by firework stalls in Visakhapatnam in 2022. DEEPAK K. R.

What is biotransformation technology and how can it reduce packaging waste?

A U.K.-based startup claims to have developed biotransformation technology that can alter the state of plastics and make them biodegradable without leaving behind any microplastics. Food packaging and health care industries could greatly benefit from such an innovation

Haider Ali Khan

E-commerce giant Amazon generated an estimated 321 million kilograms (709 million pounds) of plastic from packaging waste in 2021 alone. This is a result of billions of boxes it shipped to its customers globally, according to a December 2022 report by Oceana. The ocean advocacy group notes that this is enough plastic to circle the Earth over 800 times as air pillows. While Amazon refuted Oceana's claim, stating that it follows a science-based approach to reduce packaging waste, there is a lot left to be done.

A U.K.-based startup, based at Imperial College in London, claims to have developed a technology that could alter the state of plastics and make them biodegradable. The company calls the process "biotransformation". It claims the technology would digest the plastic packaging waste naturally with the help of microbes and biodegrade the waste without leaving behind any microplastics.

What is biotransformation technology?
Biotransformation technology is a novel approach to ensure plastics that escape refuse streams are processed efficiently and broken down. The tech was co-developed by the Imperial College in London, U.K., and a Britain-based startup, Polymateria.

Plastics made using this technology are given a pre-programmed time during which the manufactured material looks and feels like conventional plastics without compromising on quality. Once the product expires and is exposed to the external environment, it self-destructs and biotransforms into bioavailable wax. This wax is then consumed by microorganisms, converting waste into water, CO2, and biomass.

"This biotransformation technology is the world's first that ensures polyolefins fully biodegrade in an open environment causing no microplastics," said Niall Dunne, CEO of Polymateria.

Why do we need it?
Last year in New Delhi, India's Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav said that the country is generating 3.5 billion kgs of plastic waste annually and that the per capita plastic waste generation has doubled in the past five years. Of this, a third comes from packaging waste.

In 2019, plastic packaging waste from e-commerce firms was estimated at over a billion kilograms worldwide, according to Statista.

A joint research project by the Department of Management Studies, IIT Delhi, and Sea Movement noted that Amazon generated, nearly 210 million kgs (465 million pounds) of plastic from packaging waste in 2019. They also estimated that up to 10 million kgs (22.44 million pounds) of Amazon's plastic packaging ended up in the world's freshwater and marine ecosystems as pollution in the same year.

However, Amazon India has now eliminated single-use plastics across its fulfilment centers. Flipkart has also done the same in 2021 across its supply chain.

Where can this technology be used?
Food packaging and health care industries are the two prime sectors that could use this technology to reduce waste. "The increase in cost is relatively small compared to conventional plastic that does not contain this technology", said Mr. Dunne.

Is this being used in India?
Some well-known Indian firms in food and packaging industries deploy such technologies. Within healthcare and pharma industries, this technology provides biodegradable solutions for non-woven hygiene products like diapers, sanitary napkins, facial pads, etc.

Are we heading in the right direction?
The Indian government has launched multiple initiatives to move the country towards sustainability. They have introduced a plastic waste management gazette to help tackle the ever-growing plastic pollution caused by single-use plastics. Additionally, last year, the government imposed a ban on single-use plastics to bring a stop to its use in the country.

The National Dashboard on Elimination of Single Use Plastic and Plastic Waste Management brings all stakeholders together to track the progress made in eliminating single-use plastic and effectively managing such waste.

An Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) portal helps in improving accountability traceability, and facilitating ease of compliance reporting in relation to EPR obligations of the producers, importers and brand-owners.

India has also developed a mobile app to report single use plastics grievances to check sale, usage or manufacturing of single use plastics in their area.

What are the alternatives to reducing plastic waste?
A switch to jute or paper-based packaging could potentially cut down plastic waste. This could also build sustainability within the paper industry, and save on the import bill on ethylene solutions. The wooden packaging is yet another alternative, but that will make the packaging bulkier and increase cost.

The Government of Tamil Nadu, in Chennai, organised a National Expo and Conference of Startups to raise awareness on alternatives to single-use plastics. The alternatives showcased were made using coir, bagasse, rice and wheat bran, plant and agricultural residue, banana and areca leaves, jute and cloth.

THE DAILY QUIZ

Please send in your answers to dailyquiz@thehindu.co.in

Initiated by the International Theatre Institute, World Theatre Day is celebrated on March 27. Here is a quiz on some famous Indian theatre groups and personalities

Srinivasan Ramani

QUESTION 1
Every year on January 1, the street theatre group Janam organises plays at Jhandapur village, in Sahibabad (Ghaziabad district, Uttar Pradesh). What does this event commemorate? And name the prominent theatre personality related to this event.

QUESTION 2
Derived from a classic folk tale (that was originally narrated by Rajasthani writer Vijaydan Detha), this famous play was later made into a children's film by Shyam Benegal with the same name. The play is about a "honourable thief" and his vows. Name the play and its iconic writer.

QUESTION 3
Awarded the Sangeet Natak Akademi Fellowship in 1990 for his lifetime contribution to theatre, this artist and playwright, who is well known for his roles in cinema as well, was jailed by the West Bengal government in 1965 for "subversive messages" in his play, *Kallol*. A favourite of Satyajit Ray, this person also played the lead actor in Ray's last film, in a role that, many consider, voices the views of the auteur. Name him.

QUESTION 4
Awarded the Padma Vibhushan in 2010, this thespian began her career as a member of a contemporary dance troupe before acting with the Indian Peoples' Theatre Association and the Prithvi Theatre and also making a mark in British films and television shows. Name her.

QUESTION 5
He was the art director of what was considered the "only professional experimental Tamil theatre group", Koothu-p-pattarai. He was also the recipient of the Padma Shri (2012). Name him.

Visual question:
This musical directed by Andrew Lloyd-Webber, is the longest running Broadway show and is set to close after running for more than 25 years. Name it. GETTY IMAGES

Questions and Answers to the March 24 edition of the daily quiz: 1. In the pilot episode of the show, this popular character was played by another actor. **Ans: Meredith Palmer; was played by Henriette Mantel in the first episode**
2. The name of Michael Scott's movie and the name of the cast member who wrote the episode. **Ans: Threat level midnight and B.J. Novak**
3. The cash value of a Schrute Buck. **Ans: 1/100th of a cent**
4. The common link between Angela Kinsey, Mindy Kailing, John Krasinski and Ellie Kemper. **Ans: All four were interns at the Conan O'Brien show**
5. The tagline of the advertisement Michael and the rest of the office made for Dunder Mifflin which was not used by the company. **Ans: Limitless paper in a paperless world**
6. In a prank, the character of Steve was played by this man. **Ans: Randall Park**
Visual: The character Amy Adams played in *The Office*. **Ans: Katy, handbag salesperson**
Early Birds: Siddharth Pillai| Preeti Chockalingam| Surbhi Singh| Radha Shukla| Chandan

KNOW YOUR ENGLISH

A loudmouth, a bigmouth or a badmouth?

While he is somewhat of a bigmouth, he is not malicious. It is not done with bad intentions

S. Upendran

"Hi, come on in! You seem to have gone shopping early in the morning. Any of those packets for me?"
"Sorry, no! Met Sujatha and her boss for breakfast this morning, and she..."
"Oh, yes! How is her new boss? Is he like the old one?"
"They're poles apart. The new one is a loudmouth. Got a terrible headache talking to him."
"Loudmouth? Does it mean someone who is in the habit of speaking rather loudly?"
"That's just part of the meaning. In addition to talking loudly, a loudmouth also brags about his achievements."
"In other words, he's a very annoying person to talk to."
"I guess you could say that. He's rather tactless, and as a result, at times, sounds rather rude. I've always made it a point to avoid loudmouths."
"It's not always possible to avoid them, I'm afraid. Based on my experience, every family has its share of loudmouths.
"That's true! You just have to suffer them. There are several loudmouths in my office."
"Tell me, is there a difference between a 'loudmouth' and a 'bigmouth'? Or do they have the same meaning?"
"Well, according to some dictionaries, 'loudmouth' and 'bigmouth' mean the same thing. Someone who talks loudly about insignificant matters can be called a 'loudmouth' or a 'bigmouth'. Careful users of the language, however, maintain a distinction between the two. A 'bigmouth' is someone who talks a lot, and very often about things that he shouldn't be. The word can be written as two words or one."
"In other words, a 'bigmouth' is someone who cannot keep secrets."
"Very good! A bigmouth is a bit of a gossip, and in his excitement to share interesting bits of news with others, he lets out or reveals secrets. Here's an example. Don't tell Hari about the surprise party we've planned for Shekar. He's a bigmouth, and just might tell Shekar everything."
"Tell me, does 'badmouth' mean the same thing as 'loudmouth'."
"No, it has a very different meaning. When you 'badmouth' someone, you speak ill of them. You do not say anything nice about them."
"Sounds like a few people I know. "
"The word 'badmouth' is mostly used as a verb in informal contexts. As I said, when you 'badmouth' someone, you speak ill of them – that too, behind their back. My neighbour badmouths politicians all the time."
"What does one gain by badmouthing others? How about this example? *Ever since the Manager denied her the loan, Meenakshi has been badmouthing him.*"
"That's to be expected, I guess."
upendrankye@gmail.com

Word of the day

Clemency:
good weather with comfortable temperatures; leniency and compassion shown toward offenders by a person or agency charged with administering justice

Synonyms: mildness, mercifulness, mercy

Usage: *The President granted him clemency.*

Pronunciation: bit.ly/clemencypron

International Phonetic Alphabet: /ˈklɛ.mən.si/

For feedback and suggestions for Text & Context, please write to **letters@thehindu.co.in** with the subject 'Text & Context'

Autonomous but underfunded, UVCE struggles to stay afloat

The State government is pushing the college to become 'self-financed', allege alumni

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

A file photo of the University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering at K.R. Circle in Bengaluru.

The State government has given autonomous status to the University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE) and announced it will be developed on the model of Indian Institute of Technology (IITs). However, with no adequate funding from the State government, UVCE is struggling to stay afloat. UVCE Teachers Association and a group of illustrious alumni of the prestigious institute have now been lobbying hard for adequate funding for the institute.

The alumni alleged that the State government not providing adequate funds was an attempt to push the premiere institute towards "self-financing model", which will make technical education unaffordable to the poor and downtrodden communities.

While the State government made UVCE, affiliated to Bangalore University from 1964, autonomous in March 2022, the financial and administrative powers continued to rest with the University. The "status-quo" arrangement will end this fiscal year. However, UVCE Teachers Association has written to Bangalore University to continue the arrangement for another year, as the State government hasn't given the institute adequate funding.

Additional grants

The capital and operational expenditure of the UVCE is around ₹47.69 crore per annum. However, the government has announced only ₹22.4 crore in the 2023-24 annual budget, which is enough for only regular faculty's salary and leaves a deficit of ₹25.29 crore. The university needs an additional ₹6.5 crore for guest faculty remuneration, ₹3 crore for outsourced employees' remuneration, ₹13.5 crore operational expenditure, ₹1 crore for National Pension Scheme (NPS) contribution and ₹1.5 crore for Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) Research Scholars scholarship.

UVCE Teacher's Association has written to the State government seeking additional grants, to no avail yet. "Only announcing that UVCE will be developed on the lines of IIT is not enough, the government needs to put its money where its mouth is and invest in the college. If a prestigious institution like UVCE is converted into a self-financed institution, only those with money will be able to study there. We will fight this along with students, teachers and parents," said Prof. M.N. Srihari, a distinguished alum of the institution.

However, B. Muthuraman, Chairman of Governing Council, UVCE, said that the State government had promised to provide funds for the development of UVCE. "The government has promised us to provide interim relief, after which we will discuss with them on the long term requirements of UVCE," he said.

Complaint filed

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

A complaint has been filed with the Central division Cybercrime police against Kannada film producer Prashanth Sambaragi, who launched 'Jhatka Cut' campaign against Halal meat, for defamatory social media posts against former PM H.D. Deve Gowda and former CM H.D. Kumaraswamy.

Majority of teaching staff opt for BU

Jayanth R.
BENGALURU

Owing to fund crunch in University Visvesvaraya College of Engineering (UVCE), after being accorded autonomous status, 69 out of 78 teaching staff have decided to opt for Bangalore University.

UVCE was affiliated to Bangalore University from 1964 and was accorded autonomous status in 2022, giving the teaching faculty an option to either remain with UVCE or opt for Bangalore University. Of the 78 teaching faculty, only 4 have opted for UVCE, five are yet to make a choice even as the rest have opted for the B.U.

"Due to the financial instability, the teachers are scared about the security of their future at UVCE. Since the government has also given us an option, a majority of us have decided to stay with the Bangalore University," said Dr. H.C. Chittappa, president, UVCE Teachers' Association, said.

However, B. Muthuraman, Chairman of Governing Council, UVCE, hoped the uncertainty over funding for UVCE would be resolved soon and the institute would be able to retain all the teaching faculty.

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525th Ammandivilai Kanyakumari District Tamilnadu
526th Kattur, Trichy Tamilnadu
527th Guwahati Assam
528th Bengaluru - Jayanagar, Karnataka
529th Chennai - Perungalathur Tamilnadu
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Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister
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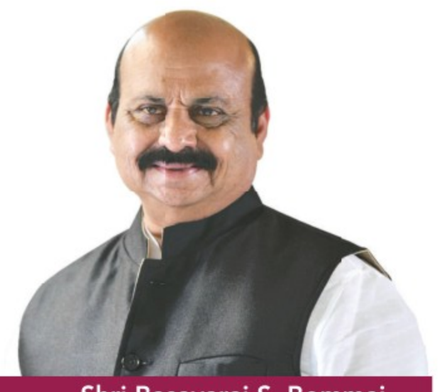
Department of Health and Family Welfare
Department of Medical Education
An Era of continued Healthcare Development in Karnataka

Shri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Ayushman Bharat - Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya - Arogya Karnataka Yojane
Launch of Ayushman Card Distribution Programme
Launch by
Dr. Mansukh L. Mandaviya
Hon'ble Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers
In the August Presence of
Shri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Presided by
Dr. K. Sudhakar
Hon'ble Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education
27-03-2023 • 11:30 AM • Sulalappana Dinne, Near KV Campus, BB Road, Chikkaballapur
Rs.5 Lakh worth of free treatment annually for the BPL families in the scheme.
Health cover of Rs.1.5 Lakh annually for APL families on co-payment basis (30%)
National Portability across all Empanelled Hospitals across the Country.
1650 Treatment Packages can be availed under the scheme implemented through Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust.
Number of beneficiaries treated under the scheme so far

Year	Govt. Hospital	Private Hospital	Total
Financial Year 2018-19	44,034	24,337	68,371
Financial Year 2019-20	4,95,541	1,01,401	5,96,942
Financial Year 2020-21	6,45,582	1,83,685	8,29,267
Financial Year 2021-22	11,31,168	1,85,749	13,16,917
Financial Year 2022-23*	19,86,667	1,52,398	21,39,065
Total (From Nov. 2018 to 20 Mar. 2023)	43,02,992	6,47,570	49,50,562

2,945 Government and 502 Empanelled Private Hospitals are providing treatment.
So far more than 49 Lakh beneficiaries have been treated under this scheme.
Through Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust, Rs.5,924 Cr. were spent on treatment.
Achievements of the State
- Karnataka ranks First in the Country on the number of Empanelled Hospitals.
- More than 1.38 Crore co-branded cards have been registered in the State so far.
- Free Organ Transplant Scheme is being provided to the poor and so far more than 150 beneficiaries have benefited from the scheme.
- Up to Rs.1 Lakh is provided for 76 types of free treatment under the trust for accident victims at all empanelled hospitals within the first 48 hours.
- Timely Settlement of Claims within 15 days to Empanelled Hospitals.
- Played a vital role in provision of beds and reimbursement for COVID-19 treatment costs for patients and excess charges of Rs.2.86 Crore has been recovered and reimbursed to the beneficiaries.

Hon'ble Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education, Dr. K. Sudhakar participating in Health Department programme.
For more details, visit your nearest Government Hospital or please call Toll-Free Helpline 14555 / 1800 425 8330
"To protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures." - is the fundamental duty of every Citizen of our Country, enshrined in the Constitution.
Wear Mask · Follow Physical Distancing · Maintain Hand Hygiene · Avoid Crowded Places · Don't spit in public places · Get yourself voluntarily vaccinated
Your Health, Our Responsibility.

Published by Nirmala Lakshman at No 19&21, Bhagwan Mahaveer Road, Bengaluru-560001 and Printed by C. Sridhar at Plot No. 13-D, Bommasandra-Jigani Link Road, KIADB Industrial Area, Bommasandra, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru-560099 on behalf of THG PUBLISHING PVT LTD., Chennai-600002. Editor: Suresh Nambath (Responsible for selection of news under the PRB Act).
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INBRIEF

Ambareesh memorial to be inaugurated today

The memorial, which has been built in Bengaluru in honour of Kannada actor and political leader the late M.H. Ambareesh, is being inaugurated by Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Monday. The memorial is being inaugurated on the premises of Sri Kanteerava Studios in Bengaluru at 6 p.m. at a programme being organised by the Department of Information and Public Relations.

Statues of Basaveshwara and Kempe Gowda unveiled

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday unveiled the statues of Basaveshwara and Kempe Gowda on the Vidhana Soudha premises. The unveiling of the statues ahead of elections is being seen as a political outreach to the two dominant communities -Lingayats and Vokkaligas. The statues were unveiled in the presence of religious leaders, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai and former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa.

Funds approved for widening Belur-Hassan section of NH

The Union government has approved ₹698.08 crore for widening of the Belur-Hassan section of National Highway-373 with the addition of paved shoulders. Taking to Twitter to announce this, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari on Sunday said this project will be carried out in the Engineering, Procurement and Construction mode.

Change in quota matrix triggers sparks

Cong. vows to scrap it if voted to power, while HDK asks how change is possible without a report being submitted by backward classes commission

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU/HUBBALLI/MYSURU

The politics of reservation ahead of elections to the Assembly intensified on Sunday as the Opposition Congress and Janata Dal (S) traded barbs with the ruling BJP over the allocation of reservation for Veerashaiva-Lingayats and Vokkaligas by withdrawing 4% reservation to Muslims in the OBC category.

While the Congress announced that the decision would be scrapped if voted to power, the BJP defended that the decision was fair and as per law.

"The BJP government's decision is a betrayal and taken around the time of elections," KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar told presspersons in a joint press conference on Sunday.

"Government has announced reservation even before the backward classes commission gave its final report. While Lingayats and Vokkaligas had asked for 15% and 12% reservation, the government has given 2% reservation as alms. Instead of snatching away reservation benefits of Muslims, why did the government not go beyond the 56%? The BJP is sowing seeds of hatred among communities," he alleged.

Pointing out that reservation to Muslims was given in 1995 and was not based on the population, Leader of the Opposition Siddaramaiah said that there has been no order from any court to abolish it. "What is the reason for withdrawing reservation to minorities? Is there any report recommending inclusion of Muslims in EWS quota?" he asked.

The former Chief Minister also pointed out that courts have rejected changes in reservation in Haryana, Maharashtra and other States where reservation was provided without studies or data.

JD (S) leader H.D. Kumaraswamy told reporters in Mysuru that the BJP government had made a hasty announcement for electoral gains. "Has the Karnataka State Backward Classes Commission made a recommendation in this regard? How will you give effect to the reservation without the commission submitting a report? By scrapping the 4% reservation to Muslims and distributing it to Lingayats and Vokkaligas, BJP government was creating disharmony in the society," he said.

Karnataka Congress president D.K. Shivakumar with Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Siddaramaiah, and AICC general secretary Randeep Surjewala at a press meet in Bengaluru. PTI

CM defends

However, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai refuted allegations that the decision was taken for election dividends.

"Though several persons had advised me not to disturb the reservation, we went ahead with internal reservation. We have met the 30 year old demands based on reports and as per law. We have worked with conscience. The Congress had only given assurances and had hoodwinked the communities at the last moment," he told reporters in Hubballi. Stating that the Congress was now frustrated, he said that it had misguided the SCs/STs by showing sympathies.

Reservation to Muslims on basis of religion is unconstitutional: Shah

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

Endorsing the Karnataka government's decision to scrap reservation to Muslims under 2B category of Other Backward Classes (OBC) and distributing it between Vokkaligas and Veerashaiva-Lingayats, Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said that giving reservation to Muslims was unconstitutional.

"The Bharatiya Janata Party never believes in appeasement politics. Congress had, in order to make its vote bank happy, given 4% reservation to minorities. The BJP scrapped it a day before and distributed the reservation to Vokkaligas and Veerashaiva-Lingayats. The reservation given to minorities was unconstitutional. There is no provision to give reservations to anybody based on religion. However, the Congress had, because of its appeasement policy, given reservations to minorities. The BJP government has now scrapped it and I would like to congratulate Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai for the decision," Mr. Shah said.

Statue unveiled

He was speaking at a public meeting on Sunday after unveiling a martyrs' memorial column and a 20-feet statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and hoisting the national flag on the 103-feet-tall flag post at Gorta village in Bidar district.

Mr. Shah also justified the government's decision to redistribute reservation quota within Scheduled Castes (SCs) by stating that his party had attempted to remove the injustice being meted out to some communities within the SCs.

"By giving reservations of 6% for SC (Left), 5.5% for SC (Right), 4.5% for SC (Lambani, Korcha and Korama), and 1% for others within the SCs, our government has removed the injustice," Mr. Shah said.

Former Chief Minister B.S. Yediyurappa, BJP State president Nalin Kumar Kateel, Union Minister Bhagwanth Khuba, and other senior party leaders were present.

Seers were pressurised to accept decision: DKS

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

KPCC president D.K. Shivakumar on Sunday accused that four seers have been pressurised in accepting the reservation quota.

"The government has called Panchamasali seer Jayamruthyunjaya Swami and Adichunchangiri Mutt seer Nirmalanandaswami 20 to 25 times and have been urging them to accept its decision," he told reporters in Bengaluru.

"What was the reservation that Vokkaligas sought in the memorandum? Revenue Minister R. Ashok had agreed to implement the demand. Are Vokkaligas and Lingayats beggars to receive alms that has been snatched from Muslims and given to them?" he asked.

'No pressure tactics'

However, denying any pressure tactics, Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai told reporters in Hubballi: "I have not spoken to any seer. The seers know everything and they have independent thoughts. There is no need to stress or pressurise anyone."

Slugfest over Surjewala calling Chief Minister 'Shakuni'

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

Congress general secretary in charge of Karnataka Randeeep Surjewala calling Chief Minister Basavaraj Bommai as 'Shakuni' on Sunday triggered a slugfest between the Congress and the BJP leaders. In a joint press conference on Sunday, Mr. Surjewala equated Mr. Bommai to Shakuni while accusing him of duping and deceiving the people of Karnataka.

Responding to the accusation, Mr. Bommai said he did not need Mr. Surjewala's certificate. "People know who is a Shakuni and who is Duryodhana. I will remain the common man's Chief Minister," he said.

Pancharatna Yatra of JD(S) concludes with mega convention

The Hindu Bureau
MYSURU

The mammoth convention held by the JD(S) in Uttanahalli on the outskirts of Mysuru on Sunday, featuring former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda, marked the conclusion of 90 days of the Pancharatna Rathyatra.

Ever since it was inaugurated at Mulbagal in Kolar district, the rathyatra that promises to launch five welfare programmes for the people of Karnataka - free education, free healthcare, initiatives for the farmers in agriculture and irrigation, employment for one member of each family and housing - rolled into 88 Assembly constituencies, covering almost 10,000 km.

Addressing the valedictory of the Pancharatna Yatra in Mysuru on Sunday, Mr. Gowda in his first public appearance in months, appealed to the people of the State to "bless" the party in the coming elections and help shape the future of Karnataka.

He made an emotional pitch in what was a show of strength by the JD (S) in a region where it has a formidable presence. He said his frail health had kept him out of public activity for six months, adding that he was grateful to the almighty for bestowing him with enough strength to attend the valedictory of the Pancharatna Yatra.

He said his son H.D. Kumaraswamy as the Chief Minister of the State had worked for the welfare of farmers and the downtrodden during his short stint despite various constraints.

Mr. Deve Gowda was later ushered out of the venue in a trolley on which his chair was hoisted, with his sons Mr. Kumaraswamy, H.D. Revanna and the former PM's grandsons alongside waving at the crowd which cheered the JD(S) leaders.

Mr. Kumaraswamy slammed the BJP and said that it did not worry about the development of the State for the last three years but was now on a foundation-stone laying spree ahead of the elections. He said though Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been visiting the State frequently in recent times, he failed to make a single visit when Karnataka was reeling under floods or other natural calamities.

Former Prime Minister H.D. Deve Gowda at the valedictory event of the Pancharatna Yatra in Mysuru on Sunday. M.A. SRIRAM

Students attacked by honeybees write exam at hospital

The Hindu Bureau
KALABURAGI

Four students who were on their way to write the entrance examination for Karnataka Adarsha Vidyalaya at Kushtagi were attacked by honeybees on Sunday. Three of them were admitted to a hospital and they wrote the examination at the hospital. The students were at Christ King School, one of the exam centres, when the honeybees attacked them.

"Honeybees attacked four students. One sustained minor injuries and took the examination at the designated centre. The other three were admitted to a local hospital," M.A. Radder, Deputy Director of Public Instruction, Koppal, told *The Hindu*.

OBITUARY & REMEMBRANCE

DEATH ANNIVERSARIES

10th Death Anniversary

Dr. M. Mary Bai
(Retd. scientist & Joint director from Zoological Survey of India)
Missing you very much mom
Son: **Dr.Rajendran Krishnan,** Daughter-in-law: **Mrs.Joy Lindaa Samuel,** Grandchildren: **Baby.Johanna Helen Mary & Master.Jerome Kris Samuel**

Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Department, Kolar

E-procurement Short-Term Tender Notification No:40/2022-23, Dated:17.03.2023

On behalf of Governor of Karnataka, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Department invites tender for the scheme of Jal Jeevan Mission (Functional household tap Connection) 2022-23 of Kolar, Mulbagal, Bangarpet & Malur Taluks of Kolar District. Item rate tenders by two cover system through e-procurement portal. Those who have registered in PWD/CPWD (Government of Karnataka) are eligible in participation of tendering for more details visit website **http://www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in** Last date for online submission of Bid is **27.03.2023 upto 17.30 hours.**

Sd/-Executive Engineer, RDW&S Division, Kolar

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಕೋಲಾರ/ಆರ್.ಓ.ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ 574/ಎಂ.ಸಿ.ಎ/2022–23.

HAVE SYMPTOMS OF COVID-19? CALL APTHAMITRA ON 14410

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

Rural Drinking Water and Sanitation Department

Office of the Executive Engineer,
Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Department,
Chickballapur Division, Chickballapur. Ph: 08156-270058
E-mail: eerdwsd.ckb2@gmail.com
No.:EE:RDW&SD:CBP:AE-2: 2022-23 Date: 18.03.2023

Tender Notification No.63/2022-23, Date: 18.03.2023

(Through e-Procurement Portal)

Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water & Sanitation Division, Chickballapur, On behalf of Governor of Karnataka Invites request for proposal of tenders from the eligible bidders for the work of Providing FHTC"S to 13 Villages in Bagepalli Taluk Chickballapur District. One & Two Cover tender procedure as per rule 28 of the KTPP act shall be followed. The tenderers are required to submit (Under KW-I, KW-II & KW-III) tenders through E-Procurement portal **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in (1)** Last Date & Time for Receipt of Bids: **27.03.2023 Time 5.00 P.M. (2)** Date & Time of Technical Bid Opening: **29.03.2023 Time 11.00 A.M. (3)** Date & Time of Financial Bid Opening: **30.03.2023 Time 11.00 A.M.** More details can be had from the office of the undersigned and also through **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** by clicking List of Tenders which will link to all Dept. works list.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Rural Drinking Water & sanitation Department Chickballapur

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಚಿಕ್ಕಬಳ್ಳಾಪುರ/ಆರ್.ಓ.ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ589/ಎಂ.ಸಿ.ಎ/2022–23

STAY PROTECTED FROM COVID-19, NO CARELESSNESS UNTIL THERE IS A CURE.

Wear Mask | 6 Feet Follow Physical Distancing | Maintain Hand Hygiene

BANGALORE WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD

INVITATION FOR TENDER (Only Through e-procurement Portal)

BWSSB invites Tenders from Registered Agencies for the following works.

Office of the Chief Engineer (South), 7th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.

Sl No.	Division	IFT Number	Amount put to tender / EMD (In Rs.)	Last date & time for Submission of Tender	Date & time for Opening of Tender
1	South West-1	BWSSB/EESW-1/TO/PB/2447/ 2022-23 Date: 24.03.2023 **(Reserved For SC Category) (2nd Call)**	Rs. 15,64,715/- / Rs. 19,600/-	04.04.2023 upto 4.00 pm	06.04.2023 after 3.00 pm
2		BWSSB/EESW-1/TO/PB/2447/ 2022-23 Date: 24.03.2023 **(2nd Call)**	Rs. 38,99,668/- / Rs. 78,000/-		
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (South West-1)
Office of the Chief Engineer (Design & QA), 9th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.					
3	MIS	BWSSB/EMS/TE/PB/AE/472/ 2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023	Rs. 58,99,671/- / Rs. 1,18,000/-	11.04.2023 upto 4.00 pm	13.04.2023 at 12.00 noon
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (MIS)
4	DE&PS	BWSSB/EDEPSTE/AE/693/ 2022-23 Date: 24.03.2023 **(3rd Call)**	Rs. 52,76,214/- / Rs. 1,05,524/-	03.04.2023 upto 4.00 pm	05.04.2023 at 4.30 pm
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (DE & PS)
5	DC&BM	BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4666 /2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023	Rs. 11,89,927/- / Rs. 29,748/-	04.04.2023 upto 4.00 pm	05.04.2023 after 4.01 pm
6		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4664 /2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023	Rs. 11,89,927/- / Rs. 29,748/-		
7		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4662 /2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023	Rs. 11,89,927/- / Rs. 29,748/-		
8		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4660 /2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023 **(Reserved For ST Category)**	Rs. 11,89,927/- / Rs. 14,874/-		
9		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4658 /2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023 **(Reserved For SC Category)**	Rs. 11,89,927/- / Rs. 14,874/-		
10		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4656 /2022-23 Date: 21.03.2023	Rs. 78,62,430/- / Rs. 1,57,249/-		
11		BWSSB/EE(DC&BM)/PB/4751 /2022-23 Date: 24.03.2023	Rs. 54,77,672.42 / Rs. 1,29,300/-		
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (Design Civil & Building Maintenance)
Office of the Chief Engineer (West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.					
12	North West-1	BWSSB/EE(NW-1)/PB/4199 /2022-23 Date: 23.03.2023	Rs. 11,46,023/- / Rs. 34,000/-	11.04.2023 upto 5.30 pm	13.04.2023 after 3.00 pm
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (North West-1)
Office of the Chief Engineer (North), 2nd Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.					
13	North East	BWSSB/EE(N-E)/TO/PB/3249/ 2022-23 Date: 23.03.2023	Rs. 34,10,137/- / Rs. 80,480/-	06.04.2023 upto 4.00 pm	11.04.2023 after 3.00 pm
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (North-East)
Office of the Chief Engineer (WWM-West), 6th Floor, Cauvery Bhavan, KG Road, Bengaluru-560009.					
14	(WWM -N) V.V	BWSSB/EE(WWM-Network) V.V/PB/1506/2022-23 Date: 16.03.2023	Rs. 7.40 Lakhs / Rs. 22,000/-	10.04.2023 upto 4.30 pm	12.04.2023 at 4.00 pm
15		BWSSB/EE(WWM-Network) V.V/PB/1504/2022-23 Date: 16.03.2023 **(Reserved For SC Category)**	Rs. 21.30 Lakhs / Rs. 25,200/-	02.04.2023 upto 4.30 pm	05.04.2023 at 4.00 pm
					Sd/- Executive Engineer (WWM-N) V.V

The Details regarding the tender and participation in the e-procurement portal process can be obtained by logging on to **http://eproc.karnataka.gov.in** For further details contact the above signed office during working hours. DIPR/CP/5430/Zen/2022-23

Six Bajrang Dal members booked for disrupting entertainment event

The police said the six men were opposed to the holding of 'Rang Barse' programme at Maroli in Mangaluru

The Hindu Bureau
MANGALURU

The city police booked six Bajrang Dal activists on charges of vandalising the venue of an entertainment programme at Maroli in Mangaluru on Sunday.

Police said that the six accused were opposed to the holding of "Rang Barse" programme in Maroli and identified them as Ganesh Attavar, Jai Prashanth, Balachander, Akshay, Chirag and Mithun.

Members of the Bajrang Dal also damaged publicity materials of the event in Mangaluru on Sunday. SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT

The programme was scheduled between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. and it began around noon. Around 2 p.m., the men reached the venue and had a heated exchange with the organisers. They said that they would not allow such a programme to continue.

In a video of the altercation that has gone viral, a Bajrang Dal member is heard saying, "We have told you to stop the programme in nice words. But, you are not listening. Do not bring names of Member of Parliament and MLAs here. We will take action to stop the event."

The activists then damaged posters and flexes of the event displayed outside the venue and also brought down some publicity materials. The local Kankanady Town police rushed to the venue and took the men to custody. On a complaint by the organiser, the police also registered a case against the six activists. Police Commissioner Kuldeep Kumar R. Jain said the police had given permission to the organiser to hold the event by imposing several conditions. "If anybody is opposed to the event, a complaint should have been filed with the police. Instead, the group took law into their hands," he said.

Innocent, veteran Malayalam actor and former MP, passes away at 75 in Kochi

P.K. Ajith Kumar

Innocent, who died in Kochi late on Sunday aged 75, was one of Indian cinema's greatest comedic talents. A cancer survivor, he had been keeping unwell for a while and was undergoing treatment at a private hospital.

A medical bulletin issued by the hospital said Innocent was admitted there on March 3 for respiratory ailments following COVID infection and that he had been shifted to the ICU after respiratory infection. He died from these ailments, multi-organ failure and heart attack, it added. He is survived by his wife, son and grandchildren.

Innocent

He acted in about 500 Malayalam films. He was a producer, author and former MP for Chalakudy. He also went on to become the president of the Association of Malayalam Movie Artists (AMMA).

Not many people have made the Malayali laugh the way Innocent did. He was brilliant as an actor in his films, most of which had him do comedy, but off the screen, he was funnier. His first book, *Njan Innocent*, would alone prove that. It is also one of the finest books on childhood you would come across. It is, of course, as an actor that the world has known him better. He was in a class of his own.

In a career spanning over five decades, Innocent gave life to some of the most loved characters of Malayalam cinema.

After doing small roles, Malayalam cinema woke up to his extraordinary talent in the 1980s, through films like *Ponmuttayidunna Tharavu*, *Ramji Rao Speaking*, *Vadakkunokkiyanthram*, *Varavelpu*, *Pradeshika Varthakal*, and *Mazhavil Kavadi*, the film which won him the State Award for the best supporting actor. His popularity soared through his superb shows in films such as *Kilukkam*, *Gajakesariyogam*, *No. 20 Madras Mail*, *Sandesam*, *Devasuram*, *Godfather*, and *Mithunam*.

It didn't take him long to prove that he was among the finest character actors of Malayalam cinema.

In 2014, he created history when he won the Lok Sabha election from Chalakudy as an Independent candidate supported by the LDF. It was a first for Kerala, where the people don't accept stardom as an easy ticket for electoral success, unlike other South Indian States.

Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and his Cabinet colleagues, and former leader of the Opposition Ramesh Chennithala condoled the death.

(With inputs from Kochi Bureau)

BRS to stay away from Karnataka election

B. Chandrashekhar
HYDERABAD

The Bharat Rashtra Samithi (BRS), which has been keen on testing the electoral waters in neighbouring Karnataka and Maharashtra ever since its makeover from the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS), is likely to stay away from the Assembly elections in Karnataka, due in April-May.

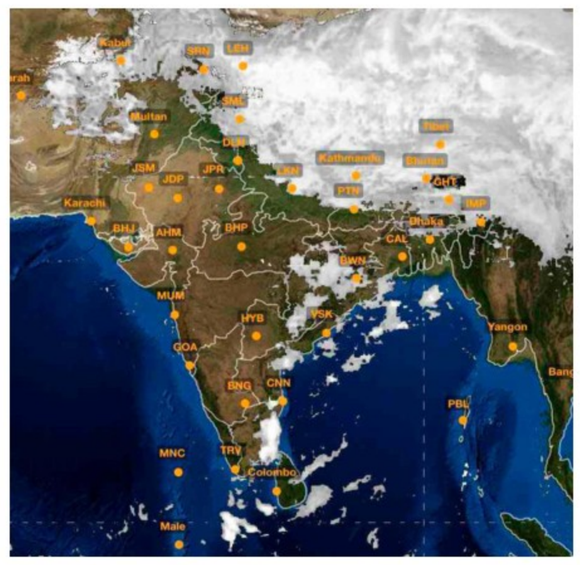
This, party sources said, has been decided to prevent a split in the anti-BJP and anti-Congress vote and help the Janata Dal(S) get as much support as possible. The BRS leaders, however, will participate in electioneering in Karnataka in support of JD(S) candidates, particularly in the neighbouring districts and other areas where Telugu-speaking people are concentrated.

A senior leader considered close to the BRS president stated that there was no formal request from the JD(S) asking the BRS to stay away from the Assembly election so far but they sought support in campaigning in constituencies neighbouring Telangana and Andhra Pradesh as also in areas having a high concentration of Telugu-speaking people.

Given BRS president K. Chandrasekhar Rao's statement at the Kandhar-Loha public meeting in Maharashtra on Sunday, the party could be in the fray in the Assembly election in Maharashtra as the NCP still has an alliance with the Congress.

WEATHERWATCH

Rainfall, temperature & air quality in select metros yesterday



TEMPERATURE DATA: IMD, POLLUTION DATA: CPCB, MAP: INSAT/IMD (TAKEN AT 17.00 HRS)

Forecast for Monday: Heavy rainfall very likely at isolated places over Arunachal Pradesh, Assam and Meghalaya. Thunderstorm accompanied with lightning and gusty wind likely at isolated places over Odisha, West Bengal; with lightning over Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, and Puducherry

CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN	CITY	RAIN	MAX	MIN
Agartala	—	31.8	21.0	Kozhikode	—	35.7	26.3
Ahmedabad	—	33.0	19.9	Kurnool	—	37.5	24.8
Aizawl	—	28.0	13.4	Lucknow	—	31.1	19.4
Allahabad	—	36.3	21.0	Madurai	—	37.8	24.6
Bengaluru	—	32.6	22.5	Mangaluru	—	33.4	23.3
Bhopal	—	34.9	18.0	Mumbai	—	31.4	22.0
Bhubaneswar	—	35.2	24.5	Mysuru	—	36.1	18.4
Chandigarh	—	27.0	15.0	New Delhi	—	30.2	16.2
Chennai	—	33.1	27.1	Patna	—	34.4	19.9
Coimbatore	—	35.4	24.2	Port Blair	—	32.2	24.6
Dehradun	9.0	26.9	12.8	Puducherry	—	34.8	25.2
Gangtok	0.3	18.6	11.6	Pune	—	34.4	16.7
Goa	—	34.0	20.7	Raipur	—	37.0	20.2
Guwahati	5.0	29.0	19.4	Ranchi	—	32.7	19.6
Hubballi	—	34.0	19.0	Shillong	0.4	20.5	12.3
Hyderabad	—	34.2	23.2	Shimla	15.0	16.9	4.3
Imphal	0.2	28.6	13.7	Srinagar	4.0	14.4	5.7
Jaipur	—	29.3	21.0	Thiruvananthapuram	—	35.5	25.5
Kochi	—	32.4	26.6	Tiruchi	—	37.3	25.6
Kohima	—	20.0	11.0	Vijayawada	—	34.9	26.0
Kolkata	—	33.7	26.0	Visakhapatnam	—	32.2	25.8

(Rainfall data in mm; temperature in Celsius)

Pollutants in the air you are breathing

CITIES	SO_2	NO_2	CO	PM2.5	PM10	CODE
Ahmedabad	.11	..17	.24	...119	...124	
Bengaluru	.03	..—	.05	57	83	
Chennai	.12	..27	.54	17	25	
Delhi	.19	..20	.32	...258	...178	
Hyderabad	..—	..55	.91	91	...112	
Kolkata	.31	..25	.23	39	58	
Lucknow	.21	..32	.38	...152	...111	
Mumbai	.10	126	.71	...200	...152	
Pune	.98	126	113	78	69	
Visakhapatnam	.18	..42	.22	40	78	

Yesterday
Nil

Air Quality Code: Poor Moderate Good (Readings indicate average AQI)

SO_2: Sulphur Dioxide. Short-term exposure can harm the respiratory system, making breathing difficult. It can affect visibility by reacting with other air particles to form haze and stain culturally important objects such as statues and monuments.

NO_2: Nitrogen Dioxide. Aggravates respiratory illness, causes haze to form by reacting with other air particles, causes acid rain, pollutes coastal waters.

CO: Carbon monoxide. High concentration in air reduces oxygen supply to critical organs like the heart and brain. At very high levels, it can cause dizziness, confusion, unconsciousness and even death.

PM2.5 & PM10: Particulate matter pollution can cause irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, coughing, chest tightness and shortness of breath, reduced lung function, irregular heartbeat, asthma attacks, heart attacks and premature death in people with heart or lung disease

Connect the dots

Argument mapping enhances critical thinking and allows one to see the logical links across different thoughts

GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

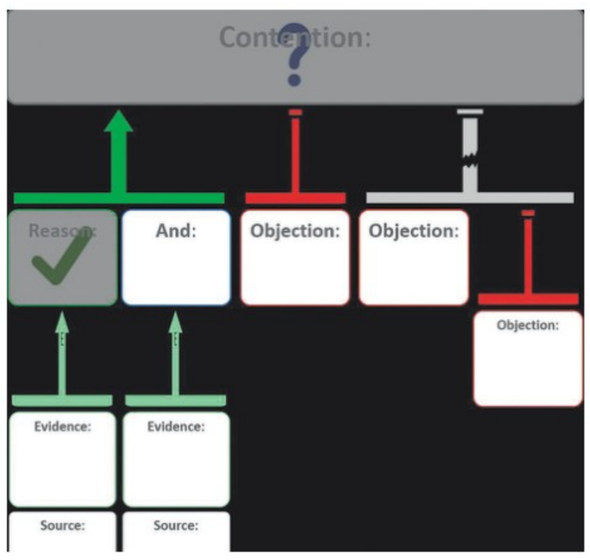
Salil Sahadevan

Sitting in small circles, students place red and green sticky notes and draw arrows and lines around some boxed statements. In between, they refer to an essay and refine the arrangements of boxes and arrows in different layers in a broad drawing sheet. This is not a design thinking class nor a session in mind mapping, but an exercise in argument mapping.

In the world of AI-generated texts, argumentation skills are increasingly relevant. From news discussions to mathematical proofs and from politics to philosophical discourses, arguments are everywhere. Does social media reduce attention span? Can current methods of consumption sustain humanity? Any of these or other questions can be examined with reasoning. The statements, claims, evidence and counter-evidence are written in separate coloured boxes. Lines and arrows connect them. So, argument maps look like tree diagrams using boxes and lines that lay out visually the reasoning and evidence for and against a claim. In other words, argument mapping, as a visual method, depicts how reasons support the claim.

Question of clarity

The roots of argument visualisation date back to classical Indian and Greek philosophy. But it is more useful and required in the teaching of critical thinking in modern times. The process involves breaking down an argument into smaller parts. Start with the contention or assertion as the main statement. Identify supporting premises, evidence, and counter-evidences. Work downwards and expand the diagram by asking the questions should I believe that, why/why not. Organise them using colour cues. For example, green for supporting evidence and red for counter-arguments. Link them by lines and arrows to illustrate how they related to each other. Thus, a good argument map explains your thinking by showing the logical links across different thoughts. It is simple, relational, interactive, visual and yet critical in approach.



Every original essay, article, report, and dissertation that students engage in is composed of arguments. Understanding the structure of those arguments can help spot flaws in the reasoning, and see how different parts of the argument fit together and how pieces of evidence contribute to the overall conclusion. Above all, it helps to construct sound and solid thinking.

Arguments are critical for higher-order thinking. Though the curricula of most subjects have many argument-relevant contents, many students struggle to develop the required skills. Argumentation skills will be critical in student success because bare information from the Internet and generative AI are generic.

We can make the arguments constructive and clear if we can 'see' them. It can help clarify the different perspectives, particularly when discussing complex or controversial topics. Argument mapping can avoid unhealthy and unending discussions. The point is not to win an argument but to animate your explanation and understand the soundness of reasoning and logic.

Apps for mapping

Constructing argument maps involves many rethinks and revisions. So pen and paper or sticky notes may not be handy always. Web tools such as ThinkerAnalytix, ArguMap, and Rationale make easy dragging and editing of components of arguments in the puzzle of argument mapping.

If you read a study that claims drinking coffee may lower the risk of cancers, look for the premises in the research, what is the evidence, how the claims are connected and whether they lead to the conclusion. If you can map that argument, you understand it well.

In selecting a course, resolving a conflict with a friend, and even getting a grip on a complex global issue such as climate change, picturise the strength and weaknesses of different claims and evidence in graphical mode. Whenever you want to go beyond the binary of yes and no, go for argument mapping and just see the argument for yourself.

Views expressed are personal

The writer is Deputy Secretary, University Grants Commission.

SCHOLARSHIPS

ONGC Sports Scholarship
The Corporate Sports Division of Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) aims to provide financial assistance to the upcoming young talented sportspersons.
Eligibility: Indian sportspersons between 14 (as of April 1, 2023) and 25 years of age (Note: Minimum age Chess, Gymnastics and Swimming will be 10 years). Applicants should not have availed of any scholarship/stipend from any other organisation during the scholarship period and he/she will have to submit undertaking to this effect.
Rewards: Between ₹15,000 and ₹30,000 per month
Deadline: March 27
Application: Online b4s.in/plus/ONGC1

Global Scholarship Programme - AIS
An initiative of AIS Technolabs Pvt. Ltd. (IT consulting company) to support high-performing, talented students in all subjects.
Eligibility: Open to citizens of India who have completed secondary/ high school and have applied for an undergraduate/ postgraduate course in any subject from an accredited college/ institution/ university in the world. Applicants must have completed at least one term in the respective course and not have dropped out
Rewards: Annual scholarship award for up to two years and other benefits
Deadline: May 15
Application: Online b4s.in/plus/GSPA5

The Gandhi Fellowship
An initiative of the Piramal Foundation (NGO).
Eligibility: Open to those between 18 and 26 years and are achievers in academics and extracurricular activities (sports, NCC, NSS, voluntary work, performing arts, debate, literature and so on). Applicants must be sensitive towards the pressing problems of the nation and graduate and postgraduate degree holders in Engineering/ Applied and Pure Science/ Commerce/ Management/ Humanities and Liberal Arts/ Social Work/ Psychology and Behavioural Science/ Mathematics/ Journalism and Mass Communication/ Education/ Law.
Rewards: A stipend of ₹25,000 - ₹28,000 per month inclusive of all expenses depending on the location
Deadline: March 31
Application: Online b4s.in/plus/TGIF4

Courtesy: Buddy4study.com

Work in progress

The Opposition is reduced to defending itself instead of attacking the BJP

The expulsion of Congress leader Rahul Gandhi from the Lok Sabha, following a contestable outcome of a defamation case against him in a Gujarat court, has become a new rallying point for the Opposition, at least momentarily. All the technical arguments notwithstanding, his disqualification is seen by most Opposition parties as a political move of the ruling BJP. Regional parties continuously adjust their relationship with the two national parties, the BJP and the Congress. From the vantage points of many regional outfits, these two parties are not necessarily two polar opposites. As a general rule, regional parties seek to expand their influence and power through fluctuating relations with the national parties, even when they are technically equidistant from both. The party in power in Delhi has considerable leverage, and regional parties are often vulnerable to pressure. In recent years, central agencies (the ED and the CBI) have cornered Opposition leaders, and gone either aggressive or passive on cases according to the convenience of the BJP. While these facts were apparent, regional leaders have remained wary of confronting the BJP, and have often broken ranks with the rest. The TMC, for instance, was not in alignment with the Congress-led strategy against the BJP on the Adani controversy.

The expulsion of Mr. Gandhi has prompted the TMC, the Aam Aadmi Party, the Bharat Rashtra Samithi and the Samajwadi Party, which are usually wary of the Congress, to condemn the action and call it out as dictatorial. These parties possibly realise that mutual rivalries and fear of the BJP and the central agencies could drive them to the margins or, even worse, at the receiving end of more vindictiveness. Fourteen of these parties have now approached the Supreme Court against the misuse of central agencies. The petitioners say they represent 42% of the electorate, and that 95% of the cases filed by the agencies have been against Opposition leaders. This is a move for self-preservation, and these parties are still far from having a joint view on several critical national issues. At the heart of the confrontation between the BJP and the Congress are questions regarding the Adani Group of companies that stands accused of dubious ownership patterns and business transactions. The BJP and the Centre have so far deflected these questions. While Opposition parties such as the BJD and the YSRCP continue to stay aloof, it is noteworthy that other Opposition leaders have come out against the expulsion of Mr. Gandhi. Nevertheless, a robust opposition to the BJP is still a work in progress. It suits the BJP to keep the focus on Mr. Gandhi, and not on Mr. Adani.

In too deep

Sri Lanka's partners must help it navigate its difficult economic path

The International Monetary Fund's approval of a 48-month arrangement with Sri Lanka, under the Extended Fund Facility for a $2.9 billion package, has been welcomed by Colombo and its creditors, who President Ranil Wickremesinghe will now have to conclude debt restructuring agreements with. Taking credit for some of the heavy lifting, India's Ministry of External Affairs has said that India was the first Sri Lankan bilateral creditor to support the debt restructuring and to provide assurances to the IMF in January. Since last year, New Delhi has been a key part of Sri Lanka's support structure, appealing on its behalf to the IMF and World Bank, extending a $4 billion package including credit lines, loans and debt deferrals, and raising the issue of debt sustainability at the multilateral sphere including the G-20. China, Sri Lanka's biggest bilateral creditor, and Japan (part of the Paris Club of international financiers) did not move as quickly, which held up the IMF announcement. Announcing the first tranche of $330 million on Tuesday, Mr. Wickremesinghe said that the key message was to assure other lenders about Sri Lanka's capacity to service its debt, and potentially enable it to access about $7 billion from international institutions and the IMF. Some credit is due to Mr. Wickremesinghe and his cabinet who have stabilised a few indicators since coming to power in challenging times last year.

However, the IMF decision is no magic pill. This is Sri Lanka's 17th IMF bailout, and the third in the past decade. The IMF loan also comes with a number of conditions, which will cause more hardships and make the government, that has about 10% approval ratings, more unpopular. Adding to its discomfiture is the IMF distancing itself from the government's decision to postpone local elections, saying it had made no political stipulations. In its report, the IMF calls the risks to implementing the programme as "exceptionally high", refers to Sri Lanka's track record of implementing reforms as "weak", and calls for contingency plans in case there is a deeper crisis induced by weak market indicators. Apart from grappling with soaring inflation, stimulating growth and inviting global investment, the government must also ensure that creditors are satisfied with its debt restructuring process and no one accuses it of "side-deals". Sri Lanka appears committed to turning the corner, and is mending fences with every international player engaged in its complex geopolitics, including the U.S., Japan, India and China. It is important that in turn, they recognise Colombo's precarious position and cooperate in shoring up the island nation as it continues to navigate a difficult economic path.

Making sense of the disqualification of a Lok Sabha MP

P.D.T. Achary

is a former Secretary General of the Lok Sabha

The conviction, on Thursday, March 23, 2023, of Congress leader and now former Member of Parliament from Wayanad Rahul Gandhi by a Chief Judicial Magistrate's court in Surat, Gujarat, and the issuance of a notification the next day by the Lok Sabha Secretariat of Mr. Gandhi's disqualification raise some important constitutional and legal issues. The legal community is mystified by the harshness of the sentence, which is unprecedented in a defamation case. The issue will anyway be dealt with by the appellate courts. But the issues relating to the disqualification need to be examined carefully.

Section 8 of the Representation of the People Act, 1951 (RP Act) specifies the various offences, conviction for which entail the disqualification of a member of the legislature. Clause (3) of this section says that a person convicted of any offence other than those mentioned in the other two clauses, and sentenced to not less than two years shall be disqualified from the date of conviction. However, clause (4) has exempted sitting members from instant disqualification for three months to enable them to appeal against the conviction. This clause was struck down as *ultra vires* the Constitution by a two judge Bench of the Supreme Court on the ground that Parliament has no power to enact such an exemption for sitting members of the legislature *(Lily Thomas vs Union of India*, 2013). The effect of this judgment is that there is an instant disqualification of a sitting legislator as soon as he is convicted. However, the Court made it clear that in the event of the appellate Court staying the conviction and sentence, the disqualification will be lifted and the membership will be restored to him.

The role of the President

Section 8(3) of the RP Act which provides for disqualification on conviction has been subjected to judicial interpretation in a number of cases. A surface view of this provision is that the moment conviction and sentence are announced by the trial court, the member of the legislature will stand disqualified. Upon such disqualification, his seat in the legislature shall fall vacant under Article 101(3)(a). But a closer reading will reveal that the words "shall be disqualified" used therein cannot mean instant disqualification. If words like "shall stand disqualified" were used in this clause, they would have certainly meant instant disqualification without the intervention of any other authority.

The passive voice used in this clause implies that the person shall be disqualified by some authority. Who can that authority be? It cannot be the Secretary General of a House of Parliament or Secretary of a state legislature because the Constitution does not confer such power on them. Article 103 shows that the President of India is that authority who decides that a sitting member has become subject to disqualification in all cases which come under Article 102(1). Sub Clause (e) of this Article relates to all cases of disqualification under the RP Act 1951 which include disqualification on conviction and sentence under Section 8(3) of the Act.

> The law on criminal defamation needs review as every elected political person faces the danger of being put out of the electoral process for years

There are differences of opinion on the scope of Article 103, which says that if any question arises as to whether any sitting Member has become subject to any of the disqualifications mentioned under Article 102(1), the question shall be referred to the President whose decision shall be final.

There is a view that this Article can be invoked only when a dispute arises on the fact of disqualification and not otherwise. But this Article covers disqualification arising on conviction for different offences under Section 8 of the RP Act 1951. In a case of conviction under this section, where is the question of disputes? This would mean that reference to the President of the question of disqualification of a sitting Member who has been convicted for an offence covered by Section 8 is a constitutional requirement. The Supreme Court, in *Consumer Education and Research Society vs Union of India* (2009), upholds this position. This judgment says that the President performs adjudicatory and declaratory functions here.

In cases where adjudication is not required, the President can simply declare that the sitting Member has become subject to disqualification. But the intervention of the President is essential under Article 103 even in cases where a sitting member has been convicted and the disqualification is supposed to take effect from the date of conviction. Section 8(3) of the RP Act does not say that in the case of a sitting Member, disqualification takes effect the moment the conviction is announced. The words "shall be disqualified" convey this sense.

The judgment in *Lily Thomas* has certain flaws. It says that Parliament cannot enact a temporary exemption in favour of sitting members of the Legislature. But Article 103 itself provides an exception in the case of sitting Members by stating that the disqualification of sitting Members shall be decided by the President. Thus, the Constitution itself makes a distinction between the candidates and sitting Members. This was ignored by the judgment and the Court struck down the three months window given to the sitting members to enable them to appeal against their conviction. Further, such a temporary exemption in favour of sitting members of the legislature is a reasonable requirement. They are not placed in the same situation as a candidate. A sudden disqualification will cause a lot of dislocation apart from the fact that the constituency will lose its representative.

Section 8(4) was enacted to deal with precisely such a situation. In the absence of a provision such as clause 4 of Section 8, the Lok Sabha Secretariat issued a notification on March 24, 2023 declaring that Mr. Gandhi stands disqualified. This notification has presumably been issued on the basis of the judgment in the Lily Thomas case. But Section 8 (3) uses the words "shall be disqualified" and does not specify which authority shall disqualify Mr. Gandhi. Therefore, the Lok Sabha Secretariat cannot perhaps declare him disqualified without referring the case to the President under Article 103 for a declaration, which is the normal procedure followed there. The authority to declare a sitting Member disqualified on the basis of the Court's decision is not vested in the Lok Sabha Secretariat, either under the Constitution or the RP Act 1951. That power is vested in the President under Article 103. The sitting Member incurs disqualification on his being convicted and sentenced to two year imprisonment. But he "shall be disqualified" through a decision by the President. This appears to be the ratio of the Consumer Society Case (*supra*).

An issue to reflect on

The law on criminal defamation needs an urgent review. Many countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States have scrapped it. India's neighbour Sri Lanka too has done away with it. It is indeed a surrealistic situation where senior political leaders get jailed for making humorous or off the cuff remarks in election speeches. In 1965, the Supreme Court had drawn the attention of the judicial system to the need for a liberal approach to rhetorical, hyperbolic or metaphoric words used by politicians in election speeches. The Court said, "... the atmosphere is usually surcharged with partisan feelings and emotions and the use of Hyperboles or exaggerated language or the adoption of metaphors and extravagance or expression in attacking one another are all part of the game. So when the question... is argued in the cold atmosphere of a judicial chamber some allowance must be made and impugned speeches must be construed in that light" – *Kultar Singh vs Mukhtiar Singh* (1965).

In our multi-party democracy, every political party is a potential ruling party. So, every political leader is exposed to the danger of being hauled up for defamation and put out of the electoral process for long years. People of mature democracies must be able to enjoy humour without any fear. People must learn to laugh at themselves. Otherwise, we will always be busy sending people to jail.

The Opposition needs to take up the gauntlet

Harbans Mukhia

taught history at Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi

It is to the credit of the Narendra Modi-led Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) that its electoral agenda is planned out in a manner that there is always attention to every detail, be it a municipal or parliamentary election, long before the particular election is even notified. The Opposition, which stands out for not having done any such long-term exercise, is compelled to react to the Modi-set agenda. This becomes clear when the most critical election on the horizon, the general election in 2024, looms large. As things stand, perhaps even its result is predictable.

The bigger battle

The most startling political development, of the process of disqualifying Rahul Gandhi as Member of Parliament through a legal process and making a martyr of him is part of the grand plan for 2024 – of making it a fight based on a single plank of Narendra Modi versus Rahul Gandhi. Issues will become irrelevant in this battle. And Mr. Gandhi has taken up the challenge on Mr. Modi's terms: his exclusive concern is to defend himself at any cost.

The only issue for Mr. Gandhi is one that he emphasised repeatedly in his press conference held on the afternoon of March 25, 2023 – the denial of his legitimate right to respond in the Lok Sabha to charges levelled against him by some Central Ministers, which Mr. Gandhi calls "lies", as well as the alleged relationship between Mr. Modi and businessman Gautam Adani and the investment of "₹20,000 crore" in Adani Group businesses. Nothing suits Mr Modi and the BJP more than this plank.

One might be forgiven for hoping that Mr. Gandhi would have grasped the game plan by now and, therefore, rise above it. What is at stake today is an enormously bigger battle than the one between Mr. Modi and Mr. Gandhi, or over the issue of the alleged Modi-Advani relationship and the rather paltry sum of ₹20,000 crore. The battle today is one that is inescapably fixed on it being democracy versus dictatorship. Mr. Gandhi's press conference might have pleased Mr. Modi no end.

> In order to fight the next general election well, the Opposition has to ensure that the battle for 2024 is about democracy versus dictatorship than about two political individuals

Credible steps to take

It is clear to any observer that this battle will have to be fought beyond the issuing of press statements, bravado, and defending oneself against 'lies' or 'truths'. This requires a dramatic step by seizing the initiative from the BJP and inviting the entire Opposition to be the united defence of democracy. Since Mr. Modi wants to pitch the agenda as one about himself versus Mr. Gandhi, the one sure way to steal a march would be for Mr Gandhi to announce that he would not be a candidate for the Prime Minister's post in 2024. In fact, an even more decisive step would be to announce that no member of the Gandhi family would be a candidate and then call for the defence of democracy against signs of creeping dictatorship, which is evident in the state's growing control over all constitutional institutions and even the media. The drive that is relevant today is not the Congress's victory but the BJP's defeat.

The second step would be to begin negotiations with the Opposition not as their natural and given leader, but as one among equals. The Congress might have to concede much more to the Opposition parties than is even legitimately its due.

This is precisely where its statesmanship, its claim to sacrifice its narrow electoral interests for the sake of the nation, and for the nation's most valuable asset, democracy, will find resonance with the other parties and, with the nation. Pettiness over the number of seats here and the number of candidates there will ensure the defeat of this vital exercise. It is good to remember that the notion of self-sacrifice has much greater value in Indian society than the assertion of self-interest.

Going beyond well-worked modes

It is through a larger view of the crisis now and the assumption of the role of an elderly but benign conscience keeper that the Congress can re-establish itself as the country's far-seeing leader. The Opposition also needs to go beyond the well-worked modes of fighting a mighty electoral enemy, namely holding demonstrations, braving water canons and passing resolutions. There need to be some dramatic turns which take the attention away from Mr. Modi's visual spell and clever one-liners in his public meetings.

If it does unite, the Opposition must not fall prey to the BJP's strategy of 'Modi versus who', but posit the 2024 election on the alternative plank of 'democracy versus dictatorship'. In this, there need to be very clear plans, rather than general statements, to defend constitutional institutions, values, freedoms and people's welfare.

Is this hoping for too much from the Congress, the Gandhis, and the Opposition parties? The answer may be yes.

But hoping against hope is the only resort left for us hapless, ordinary citizens of India.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Disqualification case

The Editorial, "Chilling effect" (March 25), is a reminder of the impunity with which democratic and constitutional values are being trampled on. The Prime Minister ought not to forget that he is under oath to ensure transparency. "Caesar's wife must be above suspicion."

P.K. Sharma,
Barnala, Punjab

The events around the disqualification of the MP make one wonder whether there was an orchestrated move to teach this Opposition leader a lesson after his campaign to highlight an alleged Adani-government nexus. The disproportionate nature of the punishment and the scope of misuse by using the lower judiciary in getting at critics of the establishment and powerful corporates have rendered continuance of provisions for criminal defamation in the statute untenable.

Manohar Alembath
Kannur, Kerala

I disagree with some of the lines in the Editorial. Should not democracy get more and more civilised as the days go by?

Why should the right to mud-sling be taken for granted in a democracy? How is using unparliamentary words and phrases to portray someone in a bad light without a shred of evidence an integral part of democratic functioning?

Of course there is no defamation so long as the person purportedly defamed does not feel defamed. But I feel that this does not give the licence to the abuser the right to abuse another.

Athulya M.,
Hyderabad

Agitated Congressmen and women must necessarily consider that they are protesting against a court verdict. A close reading of their charge that Mr. Gandhi has been politically victimised cannot be countenanced since they do not assert that what he said was most derogatory. While the Surat court had convicted him for his outburst, the conviction that has followed cannot be faulted. The protesters seem to suggest that the former Wayanad Member of Parliament cannot be criminally hauled up even if he is found guilty.

V. Lakshmanan,
Tirupur, Tamil Nadu

Maiden boxing titles

Nitu Ghanghas and Saweety Boora have etched their names in Indian boxing history ('Sport' page, March 26). This victory will certainly inspire many India girls to take up boxing.

P. Victor Selvaraj,
Palayamkottai, Tamil Nadu

To read more letters online, scan the QR code.
Letters emailed to letters@thehindu.co.in must carry the full postal address and the full name or the name with initials.

The cost of insurance-based funding

Sakthirajan Ramanathan
is Assistant Professor of Nephrology, Madras Medical College

Sundaresan Chellamuthu
is Associate Professor of Oncology, TNMSSH(Tamil Nadu Multi Super Speciality Hospital), and President, Government All Doctors Association

The Tamil Nadu public health model is iconic. It has ensured equity in the delivery of health care, led to big improvements in maternal and infant mortality and universal immunisation coverage, and led to a low total fertility rate compared to the all-India average. In the public health sector, there are 19,866 doctors; 38,027 nursing staff; 60,181 supporting healthcare workers; a bed strength of 97,000 spread across 38 medical colleges; 18 district hospitals; 278 sub-taluk hospitals; 2,286 primary health centres (PHCs); 462 upgraded PHCs; and 8,713 health sub-centres. These cater to 5,76,174 outpatients per day and 2,15,35,000 patient bed-days a year.

There has been a change in funding for healthcare in the last decade. The funding mix varies from grants from the National Health Mission to the Chief Minister's Comprehensive Health Insurance Scheme (CMCHIS). In this article, we look at the gains and the loss due to funding through insurance companies.

Benefits of decentralisation

The State government pays a premium of ₹849 per family. In the last Budget, it had allotted ₹1,200 crore to extend insurance cover to 1.37 crore eligible families, with an annual income of up to ₹1.2 lakh. The Union government funds only a part of the responsibility at a 60:40 ratio for only 77 lakh families that fall under its criteria. The State government bears the insurance premium of the remaining 60 lakh families. The indirect funding through the insurance companies has ushered in massive changes in the functioning of the public health sector.

The central gain is the decentralisation of medical and healthcare administration. Powers have been substantially transferred to the heads of the department to purchase drugs. This has cut red tape. Decentralisation has empowered individual departments to prioritise their needs and hasten decisions in patient care in accordance with evidence-based medical advancement.

On the flip side, every department in the medical college has become an individual establishment. These departments compete with one another to maximise profit and minimise losses. As a result, secondary and tertiary healthcare systems are viewing patients and their ailments through the prism of indemnity. Negotiations with insurance companies have become cumbersome exercises for the already overworked patient care teams in public sector hospitals. Administrative delays by insurance companies have shifted the focus of hospitals from patient care, teaching and research to claiming money from companies.

The proportion of permanent staff with respect to rising patients in government hospitals has come down alarmingly. The appointment of 6,000 nursing staff and 9,800 allied health workers as contractual employees with meagre pay has driven a wedge through the workforce. Now, there are two categories: a permanent high-paid class versus a temporary low-salaried class. The alarming attrition rate among the contractual staff and the loss of well-trained staff in the new system leads to a compromise in the quality of service. Not extending the contract of nearly 350 dialysis technicians and 3,000 nursing staff has further fuelled a trust deficit among the young workforce.

Doctors in the primary health centres are functioning like managers rather than clinicians. Their focus seems to be on the implementation of Union government schemes using available finances. The newly created district health societies have brought in additional complications. These societies recruit doctors on a 11-month contract with a consolidated monthly emolument of ₹60,000, nurses for ₹15,000 and health workers for ₹8,500. These recruitments circumvent all the affirmative rules that have ensured social justice through the decades. It is deplorable that these young doctors under contractual appointments are not even eligible for reservation benefits in post-graduate medical education under the Tamil Nadu government in-service doctor's reservation scheme. The State has 10,725 MBBS seats per year in self-financing and government colleges. The irony of creating volume on the one hand and putting an end to employment opportunities through a 11-month contractual agreement on the other will open a Pandora's box.

Loss of compassion

Medicine is neither an absolute science nor a commodity but an art that needs passion and compassion. In the last 50 years we were able to achieve good indicators in health not because of administrators alone, but by ensuring that doctors came from different socio-economic strata and by empowering them with good pay and providing opportunities for post-graduation and super specialisation. They, in turn, infused the concept of modern medicine among the rural people of Tamil Nadu and made it a sustainable success. Mere profit-loss calculation and treatment of public health as a health industry will lead to an erosion of compassion among health professionals.

In Tamil Nadu, between 2012 and 2021, ₹7,783 crore was allotted in the CMCHIS to insurance companies. Of this, only ₹2,895 crore has been claimed by government hospitals. The remaining has flowed to private hospitals. This disproportionate 'diversion' of funds will further shrink funding to public hospitals.

Tamil Nadu has had a unique and robust policy framework. The current health policy and the methodology for its funding need an appraisal so that our monumental public healthcare system can be saved from systemic obliteration.

The current health policy and its funding methodology need an appraisal

The commonality of dissent and disunity

The biggest challenge for the main parties in Telangana comes from within

STATE OF PLAY

R. Ravikanth Reddy
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In the run-up to the Assembly elections in Telangana, all the three major contenders - the Bharat Rashtra Samiti (BRS), the Congress and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) - seem confident of victory. However, internal dissidence and one-upmanship is dividing their rank and file.

While Chief Minister K. Chandrashekhar Rao remains the undisputed leader of the BRS, Congress and BJP leaders are busy trying to pull down their party chiefs and sending regular complaints about them to their high command in New Delhi.

The problem of groupism in the Congress comes at a time when the party's fortunes look much better compared to a few years ago. Back then, the Congress suffered defections, election defeats and loss of confidence. The differences came to the fore when senior leaders led a mini revolt against Telangana Congress president A. Revanth Reddy, accusing him of promoting 'outsiders' at their cost. 'Outsiders' refer to leaders of the Telugu Desam Party who joined the Congress along with Mr. Revanth Reddy.

The revolt, led by former Telangana Pradesh Congress Committee (TPCC) president N. Uttam Kumar Reddy, Congress Legislature Party (CLP) leader Bhatti Vikramarka and others, led to the replacement of the All India Congress Committee (AICC) in-charge, Manickam Tagore. Manikrao Thakare, a seasoned leader from Maharashtra who replaced Mr. Tagore, successfully put a lid on the dissidence.

But the joy of unity was short-lived when differences

erupted among the cadre while planning the Haath Se Haath Jodo Yatra, an extension of Rahul Gandhi's Bharat Jodo Yatra. When Mr. Revanth Reddy announced his Yatra for Change as a part of the Haath Se Haath Jodo yatra, seniors alleged that the AICC had not given permission for the event. Mr. Revanth Reddy nevertheless went ahead with the 30-day yatra, which received a huge response in the villages and constituency headquarters. Thereafter, another leader, Maheshwar Reddy, also announced a yatra from Adilabad. All the senior leaders who had opposed Mr. Revanth Reddy's yatra joined Mr. Maheshwar Reddy's yatra on the first day. But in a puzzling turn of events, this yatra was suspended after three days. Mr. Vikramarka also embarked on a yatra from Adilabad to Khammam. This was also seen as another challenge to Mr. Revanth Reddy's yatra. Mr. Thakare inaugurated both Mr. Maheshwar Reddy's and Mr. Vikramarka's yatras. The party's argument that all the senior leaders can plan their own yatras has only confused the cadre instead of rallying them against the government.

Meanwhile, the problem of dissidence in districts and constituencies is weighing down the BRS. Sitting MLAs have allegedly taken control of party affairs in their constituencies by cutting out prominent leaders. The issue persists in most constituencies with the exception of Gajwel, Siddipet and Sircill, represented by Mr. Chandrasekhar Rao, Mr. Harish Rao and Mr. K.T. Rama Rao, respectively. In Wanaparthy, represented by Agriculture Minister S. Niranjan Reddy, Zilla Parishad chairperson Loknath Reddy and many other key leaders were apparently peeved with the Minister, and resigned from the party.

While the leadership crisis is far from acute, there are rumblings in the BRS too. In the Hyderabad district party meeting, for instance, there were accusations that the leadership is ignoring the old guard and encouraging new entrants from the opposition.

Even the BJP, which enjoys the image of being a disciplined party, is grappling with the same issues. State chief Bandi Sanjay, an aggressive leader who has become popular, is now the target of several leaders. Led by Huzurabad MLA Eatala Rajender, the unhappy lot of leaders went to New Delhi demanding that he be replaced.

Even Mr. Sanjay's friend Arvind Dharmapuri, who is Nizamabad MP, opposed his unsavoury comments on BRS MLC Kavitha Kalvakuntla, who is facing charges in the Delhi liquor policy case. The emerging power centre in the form of Rajya Sabha MP K. Lakshman is worrying Mr. Sanjay's camp. As all these issues spilled into the public domain, the party high command convened a meeting and apparently told party members that Mr. Sanjay would continue as party chief and the others would have to bury their differences.

The biggest challenge to these parties comes from within. The BRS will especially have to deal with these challenges deftly and tactfully if it wants to remain in power.

India leads in Internet shutdowns, but lacks tool to assess impact

About 60% of all the Internet shutdowns recorded the world over between 2016 and 2022 took place in India

DATA POINT

Rebecca Rose Varghese & Vignesh Radhakrishnan

Earlier this month, the Punjab government suspended mobile Internet and SMS services in the State for more than four days as it launched an operation to arrest pro-Khalistani preacher Amritpal Singh. It said that this was "in the interest of public safety, to prevent incitement to violence and to prevent disturbance of peace and public order."

The Software Freedom Law Center (SFLC), which keeps a count of Internet stoppages State-wise, has recorded eight such shutdowns in Punjab. **Map 1** shows the instances of Internet shutdowns, State-wise, recorded between 2012 and March 2023, according to the SFLC's data. Put together, the southern States recorded only six such shutdowns in this period. There was no instance of an Internet shutdown in Kerala. Elsewhere, except Himachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Sikkim, all the other States recorded at least one such instance, with Jammu and Kashmir, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh recording the highest number.

It is important to note that the Central government does not collate data on Internet shutdowns imposed by the State governments. In fact, collection of centralised data was "strongly recommended" by the Standing Committee on Communications and Information Technology, which presented its findings on "suspension of telecom/Internet services and its impact" in 2021. The Committee wanted the reasons, duration, decision of the competent authority and of the review committees to be noted for every Internet shutdown, and for the information to be made public. It came down heavily on "Internet shutdowns being used as a substitute for enforcing law and order." In 2020, the Supreme Court held that Internet suspensions should "adhere to the principle of proportionality and must not extend beyond necessary duration." When the Committee questioned the Department of Telecommunication and the Home Ministry on the test of proportionality and the procedure for lifting a shutdown, it found their replies to be "vague and lacking clarity."

The issue is of great significance to India as 60% of all the Internet shutdowns recorded between 2016 and 2022 worldwide took place in India, according to Access Now, a non-profit that defends digital rights. **Chart 2** shows the number of Internet shutdowns recorded by Access Now, in India and globally. India's share ranged between 40% and 70%.

Over the past five years (**Table 3**), India has recorded the highest number of shutdowns. There is a significant gap between India and the country ranked second.

Notably, such shutdowns are never or almost never implemented in most parts of Europe, North and South America and Oceania, while they are rampant in Africa and Asia. **Map 4** shows the frequency with which governments shut down access to the Internet.

The costs of such shutdowns have been recorded in many reports. A report released last year by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights noted that in Kashmir, "long-standing restrictions on connectivity undermined the education of students relying on remote education." It also quoted studies which showed that shutdowns impacted health systems. A 2018 paper published by the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations estimated that India lost around $3 billion between 2012 and 2017 due to shutdowns. However, in a Lok Sabha reply in 2021, the government said that it had no mechanism to assess the socioeconomic impact of Internet shutdowns.

Error 404: Net loss

The maps, chart and table are based on data collated from the Software Freedom Law Center, Access Now reports and the V-Dem (Varieties of Democracy) Institute at Sweden's University of Gothenburg

Bad for business: Due to the mobile Internet shutdown, businesses faced difficulties accepting digital payments, which hit their income. This file photo shows a tea vendor in Amritsar. PTI

Map 1 | The map shows the State-wise instances of Internet shutdowns between 2012 and March 2023

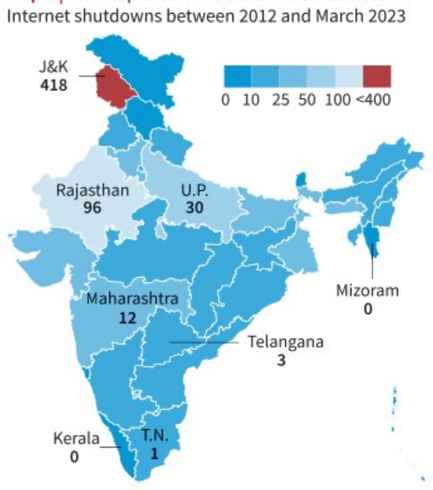


Chart 2 | The chart shows the number of Internet shutdowns recorded by Access Now, in India and globally

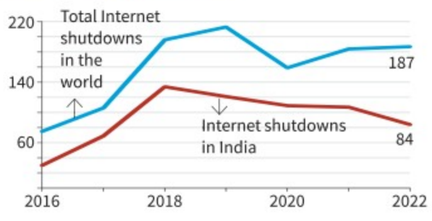
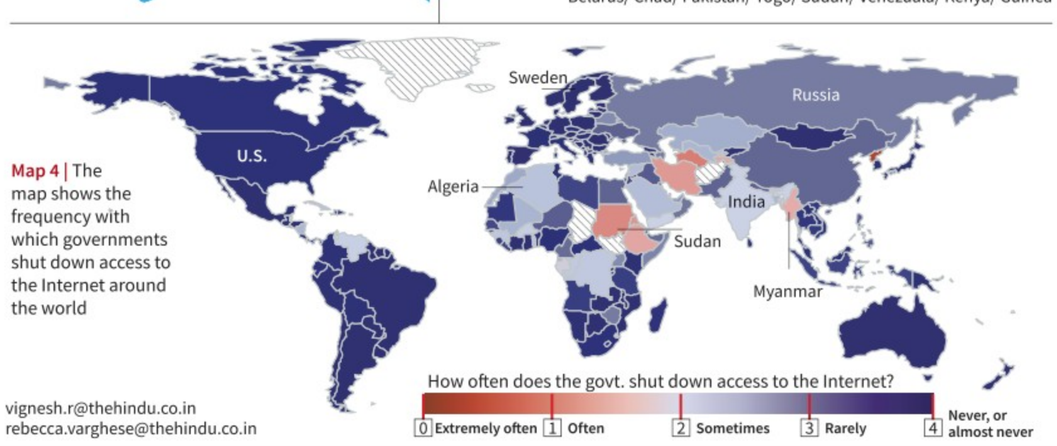


Table 3 | Top five countries in terms of Internet shutdown

2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
India (84)	**India (106)**	**India (109)**	**India (121)**	**India (134)**
Ukraine (22)	Myanmar (15)	Yemen (6)	Venezuala (12)	Pakistan (12)
Iran (18)	Iran (5)	Ethiopia (4)	Yemen (11)	Yemen/Iraq (7)
Myanmar (7)	Sudan (5)	Jordan (3)	Iraq (8)	Ethiopia (6)
Bangladesh (6)	Cuba/ Jordan (4)	*Eight countries (2)	Algeria (6)	Bangladesh (5)

*Belarus/ Chad/ Pakistan/ Togo/ Sudan/ Venezuala/ Kenya/ Guinea

Map 4 | The map shows the frequency with which governments shut down access to the Internet around the world



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FROM THE ARCHIVES
The Hindu.

FIFTY YEARS AGO MARCH 27, 1973

Milk powder unfit for consumption: Protest to WFP

New Delhi, March 26: India has protested to the World Food Programme (WFP) against the supply under the 'Operation Flood Programme' of large quantities of milk powder and ghee found unfit for human consumption. This was stated by the Minister of State for Agriculture Prof. Sher Singh, in the Rajya Sabha to-day when he was questioned both by Congress and Opposition members for allowing the distribution of damaged milk powder and ghee received from the WFP in parts of the country. Members expressed their horror and shock over the disposal of what they called "rotten" commodities among the vulnerable sections of the society. Replying to a call attention motion tabled by Mrs. Sumita Kulkarni (Cong.) and two others, Prof. Sher Singh said 4,084 tonnes of skimmed milk powder and 742 tonnes of ghee, rejected the Indian Dairy Corporation as unsuitable for recombination into liquid milk, were disposed of by the World Food Programme to various agencies in the country. The damaged commodities disposed of by the WFP included 3, 184 tonnes of milk powder and 519 tonnes of ghee for refugee relief. The Maharashtra Forest Development Board and the Rajasthan Canal Board also received the milk powder and ghee. Besides, some quantities were also sold to bakeries and other food processors. Prof. Sher Singh said part of these "damaged" quantities was "only not suitable for recombination into liquid milk but was otherwise suitable for human consumption."

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO MARCH 27, 1923

In Australia

Melbourne, Mar. 20: It is reported that as the result of a meeting of the defence council, the Admiralty will be asked to agree to interchange of vessels of Australian and Imperial Mediterranean and Atlantic fleets. Mr. Bruce, commenting on the arrival of New Zealand's flagship 'Chatham' for exercises with the Australian fleet, said that he hoped that such mutual co-operation would be extended throughout all of the Dominions and the motherland thus realising Empire naval co-operation without the sacrifice of Dominion entity. He said that the Pacific would be the venue of future events.

From Page One

Cong. holds satyagraha; MPs to wear black today

"Although, if someone is protesting in a peaceful manner without disturbing the law and order, they are not stopped. Congress' protest is going on and keeping that in mind, sufficient security arrangements have been made," the officer said.

Congress chief Mallikarjun Kharge thanked the Opposition parties for standing in support of Mr. Gandhi. He asked, "If Adani earns ₹12 lakh crore in just two-and-a-half years, then it is necessary to ask: Where did this money come from? Who gave this money?" He added, "Rahul Gandhi *ji* is fighting for the people of this country, for you, for the women, for the youth. Fighting against unemployment and inflation."

Rajasthan Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot said that in 2017, when the BJP was losing the Gujarat election, Prime Minister Narendra Modi had played the OBC (Other Backward Classes) card against the Congress there. "Modi *ji* today again wants to run a campaign to mislead the OBCs. I am an OBC and a Chief Minister. Chhattisgarh CM Bhupesh Baghel is also an OBC. What can be a bigger proof than this?" Mr. Gehlot remarked.

Senior leaders K.C. Venugopal, P. Chidambaram, Salman Khurshid, Jairam Ramesh, Mukul Wasnik, Pawan Kumar Bansal, Saktisinh Gohil, Jothimani, Pratibha Singh and Manish Chatrath were also present at the protest site.

Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee president K. Sudhakaran inaugurated the satyagraha at the Gandhi Park in Thiruvananthapuram.

The Tamil Nadu Congress Committee organised protests in 70 out of 76 districts, with TNCC president K.S. Alagiri leading the protest in Cuddalore district. Lok Sabha MP Karti Chidambaram charged that the BJP would now try to evict Mr. Gandhi from his MP bungalow and get the Election Commission to notify the byelection to the Wayanad Lok Sabha seat along with the upcoming Karnataka Assembly election.

EPFO subscribers captive investors of Adani stocks

Adani Ports and SEZ (APSEZ) has been part of the Nifty 50 since September 2015, a month after the EPFO first opened up to equity investments by deploying 5% of incremental contributions received from its members into ETFs. The APSEZ stock has also been retained in the Nifty 50 for the next six months, along with Adani Enterprises, after a recent index review by NSE subsidiary, NSE Indices.

Central Provident Fund Commissioner Neelam Shami Rao did not respond to a questionnaire sent by *The Hindu* on March 23, asking about the EPFO's exposure to the Adani group stocks, whether its fund managers had been given any instructions to avoid fresh investments in those stocks to safeguard people's retirement savings, and whether any shift away from investments linked to the Nifty 50 is being mulled.

The EPFO, which had ₹1.57 lakh crore invested in ETFs as of March 2022, is estimated to have invested another ₹38,000 crore in them during 2022-23 out of the fresh contributions amounting to an estimated ₹2.54 lakh crore remitted into EPF members' accounts.

Trustees of the EPFO that *The Hindu* reached out to said that they were not aware of its Adani stock exposures, but the issue may figure in a two-day meet of its board, chaired by Union Labour and Employment Minister Bhupender Yadav, that begins on Monday. The EPFO's investment income for this year and the interest rate to be paid to members is expected to be discussed at the Board of Trustees meeting. Last year, the EPF rate was lowered to a 45-year low of 8.1%.

Since it has only begun investing in Adani Enterprises in the past six months, its exposure to the beleaguered group's flagship stock is far lower than its accumulated exposure to APSEZ shares over the years, a government official said. The EPFO had raised its equity exposure to 10% of fresh inflows in September 2016, and further enhanced it to 15% in May 2017. However, given the sharp drop in the Adani stocks' prices since January 24, the EPFO's Adani investments will drag down its returns on investment and could have repercussions on the annual EPF rate paid to its members.

As of March 24, the Adani stock was down over 49% from the price levels at which it was included in the NSE Nifty 50, and was 58.5% below its 52-week high level of ₹4,190, reached in December 2022. APSEZ stock is down almost 19% since the beginning of 2022-23 and over 35% below its 52-week high of ₹987.8, recorded in September 2022.

Net direct tax growth for 2022-23 to slow to 15%

This included corporate income tax, personal income tax and the securities transaction tax (STT).

By February 10, the growth rate stood at 18.4%, which declined further to 16.8% by March 10, when the total net direct tax kitty stood at ₹13.73 lakh crore. That amount was 96.7% of the Budget Estimates for 2022-23 and 83.2% of the Revised Estimates for direct taxes.

"We expect to close the year with about 15% growth on the net direct tax front," the official said, adding that part of the reason for the higher growth rates recorded in the earlier part of this year was that due dates for taxpayers to remit their dues had not been relaxed this year as opposed to 2021-22, when the second wave of the pandemic had necessitated some relaxations.

Khalistan supporters try to incite violence outside Indian Embassy in U.S.

They openly threaten Indian Ambassador Taranjit Singh Sandhu, abuse a journalist covering the protest; U.S. Secret Service and police bring in reinforcements, prevent destruction of property

Press Trust of India
WASHINGTON

A group of Khalistan supporters held a protest in front of the Indian Embassy here, tried to incite violence and threatened the country's envoy. However, with the timely intervention by law enforcement agencies, they were prevented from vandalising the property.

The protesters also verbally intimidated and physically assaulted senior PTI reporter Lalit K. Jha covering the event on Saturday.

Separatist Sikhs hurled abusive language and openly threatened Indian Ambassador to the U.S., Taranjit Singh Sandhu. Mr. Sandhu was not in the embassy at the time of the protest. In their speeches, most of the protesters were trying to incite violence not only in India but here as well, including physical damage to the Indian Embassy property.

The U.S. Secret Service and the local police brought in reinforcements and more forces were deployed. At least three police vans were placed in front of the Embassy.

Strong opposition: Khalistan supporters protesting outside the Indian Embassy in Washington, USA. PTI

At one point, five protesters crossed the road and were about to break into the temporary marker of the embassy property. Secret Service personnel rushed to the spot and asked the protesters to go back to the designated protest area.

During the protest, Mr. Jha saw separatists bringing two bundles of wooden sticks that were kept in the park that has the statue of Mahatma Gandhi in front of the embassy. The wooden sticks were similar to those which were used to break the door and windows and smash the glasses of the Indian Consulate in San Francisco.

Organisers of the protest had a very hostile approach towards Mr. Jha covering the protest. They not only obstructed him by coming in front of the camera and placing the Khalistan flag on his face, but also threatened of dire consequences.

The reporter, fearing physical harm, called 911 and ran towards the other side of the road for safety.

Later, two of the protesters came towards the reporters, who were standing near the Secret Service personnel. One of them told the Secret Service that the reporter be asked to leave "my land".

They warned that if there was any violence and the reporter was physically harmed, they should not be blamed. The other protester hurled abuses at the reporter and moved the Khalistan flags that he had in his hand in such a way that it hit the reporter's ear. The Secret Service personnel asked the reporter if he was okay and if he wanted to lodge a complaint. The journalist said he did not intend to lodge a complaint.

They also warned the protesters against repeating the aggressive behaviour.

The separatists left the area around after 3 p.m. and one of them was seen keeping the bundle of wooden sticks in the trunk of the SUV.

India tells Canada to arrest those who threaten missions

Kallol Bhattacherjee
NEW DELHI

India over the weekend summoned the Canadian High Commissioner and asked the Justin Trudeau government to "arrest and prosecute" the pro-Khalistan elements who pose a threat to the safety and security of India's diplomatic missions in Canada.

The statement by the External Affairs Ministry came a day after Canadian Foreign Minister Melanie Joly responded to a question in the Canadian Parliament regarding the police operation to nab Amritpal Singh in Punjab, saying Ottawa was tracking the situation "closely".

"The Government of India sought an explanation on how such elements were allowed, in the presence of police, to breach the security of our diplomatic mission and consulates. The Government of Canada was reminded of its obligations under the Vienna Convention, and asked to arrest and prosecute the individuals who have already been identified as being involved in such acts," the Ministry said on Sunday.

Earlier, Ms. Joly, who was hosted here during the G-20 Foreign Ministers Meeting, placed Canada's concern over the situation in Punjab as there reportedly are Canadian citizens (of Indian origin) in the State who have experienced suspension of Internet services because of the police crackdown.

"We are aware of the evolving situation in Punjab and we are following it very closely. We look forward to a return to a more stable situation and you can always count on the Government of Canada to make sure that we will continue to address the concerns of many members of the community."

Journalist assaulted

The crackdown on Mr. Singh and pro-Khalistan supporters triggered protests against Indian missions in the U.K., U.S. and Canada. High Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Verma had to cancel his appearance at an event because of the threat posed by sword-wielding protesters.

Ahead of Mr. Verma's arrival, an Indian journalist was assaulted by the protesters.

"It is expected that the Canadian government will take all steps which are required to ensure the safety of our diplomats and security of our diplomatic premises so that they are able to fulfil their normal diplomatic functions," the Ministry said.

Centre caps GST cess rate on tobacco, pan masala

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Union government has capped the maximum rate of GST compensation cess that would be levied on pan masala, cigarettes and other forms of tobacco and linked the highest rate to their retail sale price.

It was brought in as part of the amendments to the Finance Bill, 2023, which was passed by the Lok Sabha last Friday.

As per the amendment, the cess rate for pan masala will be 51% of the retail sale price per unit.

The rate for tobacco has been fixed at ₹4,170 per thousand sticks plus 290% ad valorem or 100% of the retail sale price per unit.

The cess is levied over and above the highest GST rate of 28%.

'Centre told Mann to take action on Amritpal'

Vijaita Singh
NEW DELHI

Days before the Punjab Police launched a coordinated crackdown against pro-Khalistan propagator Amritpal Singh, the Union government convinced Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann to initiate action against him, according to senior Central officials.

After Mr. Singh's supporters mobbed a police station in February, Union government officials briefed Mr. Mann, warning him that the self-styled Sikh preacher was trying to cause a communal stir in Punjab by giving provocative speeches against certain communities. The Punjab government then set itself a deadline of March 31 to implement the crackdown plan.

Ten days before the police operation began on March 18, Central security agencies tracked five events in Amritsar, Mukhtsar, Tarn Taran, Mansa and Kapurthala districts where Mr. Singh addressed local people. Each meeting had a gathering of 800 to 1000 people, a Central official said.

Public meetings

At one of the meetings, the radical preacher reportedly said that Sikh policemen should take a stand for the Panth (Sikh faith) whenever there was an incident of sacrilege against the Guru Granth Sahib, the holy book of the Sikhs. At another event, he said the Punjab government planned to disarm the Sikhs by revoking their arms licences. The official said Mr. Singh attempted to create mischief by deliberately crossing Christian majority areas.

Since 2022, the Punjab government has cancelled hundreds of arms licences in a bid to end the gun culture in the State. Though the Punjab Police had kept

Amritpal Singh

a watch on Mr. Singh's activities since last year, the State government was wary of any hasty action that could provoke an agitation to support the preacher, leading to civilian deaths or injuries.

On February 23, however, a violent mob led by Mr. Singh stormed a police station in Punjab's Ajnala demanding that one of the preacher's aides be released from police custody. The protesters carried the Guru Granth Sahib as a shield. The Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government caved into the demand, but the incident acted as a trigger, ultimately leading to the police crackdown.

"The Punjab administration was already on the back foot after the sacrilege incidents post-2015. The State government feared a public outrage and any harm to the public in case of a police action after the Ajnala incident. But since a police station was attacked and six policemen were injured, a case was quietly registered against Singh, the news kept under wraps," a senior official said.

Central support

On March 2, Mr. Mann met Union Home Minister Amit Shah in Delhi, following which additional Central forces were sent to Punjab on the pretext that they were needed for the Holla Mohalla festival.

On March 18, when the police initiated action, Mr. Singh managed to give them the slip and is still on the run.

"Our assessment showed that Singh does not have a mass following, but is a threat to peace and stability in the State," said a Punjab government official. "Maybe he is being used by elements who want to show Punjab in a poor light and question the capability of the State government," the official added.

The coordination between the BJP-led Union government and the AAP-led Punjab government was further highlighted when a few of Mr. Singh's aides were booked under the National Security Act (NSA) and moved to the Dibrugarh prison in Assam.

A Central official said that the suspects were moved to Assam as they could have broken out of jail in Punjab or planned terrorist activities.

Trains to ply on 'world's highest rail bridge' in 2024: Minister

Maitri Porecha
JAMMU (REASI)

Perched between two hill slopes, at a height similar to an 85-storey tower, the Chenab bridge, which India claims is the world's highest railway bridge, will have trains plying on it by January-February 2024.

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw made the announcement during a site visit to monitor the progress of the construction on Sunday. The bridge is at a height of 359 m, making it taller than the Eiffel Tower in Paris, which stands at 330 m.

Traversing a length of 1.3 km, once operational, the Chenab bridge will pave the way for trains to run seamlessly along the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) project, and prove to be a crucial link between Kashmir and rest of India.

"The plan is to run Vande Bharat trains along the stretch and also Vande Metro trains between Jammu and Srinagar, which will reduce the travelling time between the two towns to 3.5 hours," Mr. Vaishnaw said. Currently, the travel time by road on the 248- km Jammu-Srinagar National Highway is about seven hours.

While the construction of the bridge was completed in August 2022, a broad gauge railway track was laid along the bridge later in the year. Mr. Vaishnaw conducted a trolley inspection across the bridge and supervised the construction work on tunnels.

'Survive an earthquake'

The Minister said the Chenab bridge had been constructed in a highly seismic prone area, and the biggest challenge was to get the concrete foundation design right. " The foundation of the bridge has been built to sustain an earthquake [measuring] up to eight on the Richter scale," he said.

Scaling heights: Union Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inspecting the Chenab bridge in Reasi district on Sunday. PTI

About 28,000 tonnes of steel has been used to construct the arch bridge. Owing to the strong foundation of the bridge, which can absorb the shock, the superstructure of the bridge will be isolated from any potential impact.

In topographies where granite rocks are prevalent, constructing the foundation is easy. However, the presence of dolomite rocks and soft soil make the process tougher. "The Himalayas on the side of the J&K region are young and there is always a challenge of the soft soil slipping," he said.

Another challenge was constructing tunnels along the USBRL project, 37 of them in all. While typically, tunnels are D-shaped, Himalayan tunnels need a horse-shoe shape of curvature, the elliptical shape helping ward off loose soil as the area is prone to frequent landslides, Mr. Vaishnaw said.

Ease of trade

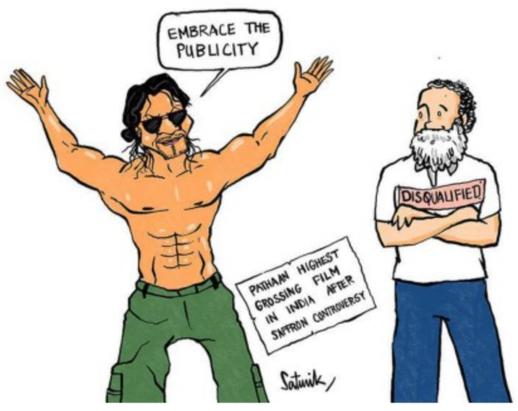
Mr. Vaishnaw mentioned that an area in Badgaon district has been identified for building a train maintenance depot for the USBRL trains. Additionally, the construction of four cargo terminals has been planned in Baramulla, which will ease trade for Kashmiri products such as dry fruits, apples, handicrafts and clothing, including the expensive pashmina fabric.

The construction of Chenab bridge raised several questions on the environmental impact of the project along the course of Chenab river. "An impact study worth ₹3 crore has been commissioned to WAPCOS (a Jal Shakti Ministry-run public sector undertaking) for understanding how the course and flow of the Chenab river has been impacted," Mr. Vaishnaw said.

While the project is being touted as the world's highest rail bridge by India, it may lose the title to China, which is constructing the Daduhe railway bridge in Ludig along the Sichuan-Tibet Railway at a height of 380 m.

"While we cannot now change the height of an already constructed [Chenab] bridge, we can only aspire to build higher bridges in future," Sanjay Gupta, Chairman and MD of the Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd., told *The Hindu*.

On the draw



Rahul calls himself 'Dis'Qualified' MP in his new Twitter bio

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Following his disqualification from the Lok Sabha, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday changed his bio on Twitter describing himself as a "'Dis'Qualified MP". He also wrote "'Dis'Qualified MP" on his Wayanad office Twitter account.

Mr. Gandhi was disqualified from the Lok Sabha on March 24, a day after a court in Gujarat's Surat convicted him in a 2019 defamation case.

The disqualification will prevent Mr. Gandhi, 52, a four-time MP, from contesting elections for eight years unless a higher court stays the conviction.

Though Mr. Gandhi is yet to file a review petition, the Congress has said it would fight the case legally and politically.

Former Finance Minister and senior Congress leader P. Chidambaram said Mr. Gandhi's disqualification would strengthen the Congress, helping its prospects in the Lok Sabha election in 2024.

Describing the political landscape as an "undeclared emergency", Mr. Chidambaram said the ruling Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) had made the Congress its "prime target", wishing its elimination in order to more easily manage the regional parties.

BJP overhauls its U.P. unit to balance caste equations for polls

Brahmins, Rajputs, non-Yadav OBCs make up lion's share of new team; party tries to pacify its core vote bank in the run-up to the Lok Sabha poll

The Hindu Bureau
LUCKNOW

Keeping its focus on the Lok Sabha election in 2024, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has attempted to pacify its core social base in Uttar Pradesh, with at least 80% of the new State leadership team hailing from the Brahmin, Rajput and non-Yadav Other Backward Class (OBC) communities.

The team, announced late on Saturday night, comprises 18 vice-presidents, 16 secretaries, seven general secretaries and six regional presidents. Prominent faces, including Noida MLA Pankaj Singh and Rajya Sabha member Surendra Nagar, have been made vice-presidents, while Abhijat Mishra, national general secretary of the BJP youth wing, has been made a secretary in the new State unit.

New look: The team comprises 18 vice-presidents, 16 secretaries, seven general secretaries and six regional presidents. AFP

Eye on polls

The BJP has appointed three outgoing regional chiefs – Dharmendra Singh (Gorakhpur), Manvendra Singh (Kanpur-Bundelkhand) and Mohit Beniwal (west) – as State vice-presidents in the new team.

At least four-fifths of the team members are either Brahmins, Rajputs or non-Yadav OBCs, with a focus on smaller population subgroups within the OBCs such as Patel and Shakya.

Out of six regional presidents, three belong to non-Yadav OBC communities while three are from upper castes.

Prakash Pal has been appointed the president of the Kanpur region, while Dilip Patel, another OBC, was appointed president of the Kashi region. A Brahmin, Kamlesh Mishra, was appointed president of the Awadh region, while Satendra Sisodia, a Rajput, was made chief of the western region.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath congratulated the new team. "Heartiest congratulations to the newly appointed office-bearers of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). I have full faith that your energy, dedication, devotion and experience will help in strengthening the organisation," Mr. Adityanath said on Twitter.

In *Mann Ki Baat*, PM stresses importance of organ donation

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in his 99th *Mann Ki Baat* address to the nation on Sunday, stressed the importance of organ donation, and said his government was working on a uniform policy that would make organ donation easy and encourage people to adopt the life-saving exercise.

He tied his address around the theme of women's empowerment, appreciated the spirit of "Sabka Prayas" in housing societies relying on solar energy, and said the Kashi-Tamil Sangamam highlighted the spirit of "Ek Bharat, Shreshth Bharat". He added that a Saurashtra-Tamil Sangamam was also being held.

Mr. Modi said the *Mann Ki Baat* show was set to air its 100th episode in its forthcoming segment, and said he was eagerly waiting for suggestions from the public about what topics to discuss.

The Prime Minister hosted the parents of Ababat who died 39 days after birth. He praised Sukhbir Singh Sandhu and Supreet Kaur for donating the organs of their daughter. He also spoke to the son of Snehalata Chowdhary, who was killed in a road accident, and lauded the family's decision to donate her organs, which saved the lives of four people and gave two others the power of sight.

Narendra Modi

Women empowerment

Mr. Modi also spoke of India's strides in women's empowerment, pointing out the achievements of the country's first locomotive pilot, Surekha Yadav; the first women legislators elected in Nagaland's history; recent Oscar winners Guneet Monga and Kartiki Gonsalves; and the Under-19 women's cricket team, among others. He made a special mention of the women in the National Disaster Response Force teams that responded to the aftermath of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. He also mentioned the praise India received globally for deploying a women-only platoon to the UN Peacekeeping Force.

Uddhav raps Rahul for remarks on Savarkar

The Hindu Bureau
PUNE

While lauding his ally and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi for asking tough questions to the BJP on industrialist Gautam Adani, Shiv Sena (UBT) leader Uddhav Thackeray sharply upbraided Mr. Gandhi over the latter's remarks on Hindutva ideologue V.D. Savarkar, remarking that the Sena (UBT) regarded Savarkar as "a deity" and would "not tolerate any insult" against him.

Addressing a rally at Malegaon in Nashik, Mr. Thackeray, the former Chief Minister of the tripartite Maha Vikas Aghadi (MVA) government, said that while his Sena faction had wholeheartedly backed Mr. Gandhi's recent Bharat Jodo Yatra, it would not tolerate any insult to their "deities" (V.D. Savarkar) in the ongoing fight to save democracy.

"Rahul Gandhi speaks well. The BJP has no answer to his questions about Gautam Adani. But today, I say openly to Rahul Gandhi, that while we have come together in this fight [against the BJP] to save the Constitution and democracy, Savarkar is our deity and we will not tolerate any insult to him," Mr. Thackeray said.

'AUKUS focus is on submarine tech., there is no room for a fourth nation'

Dinakar Peri
NEW DELHI

The primary focus of the AUKUS arrangement between Australia, the U.K. and the U.S. is submarine technology development, and within that there is no room for a fourth country, diplomatic sources said on any potential collaboration between the alliance and India.

There is a second pillar for broader technology cooperation where there is room for cooperation with other countries, including India, they said.

"AUKUS has one ambition. It's one story, not two stories... The one angle of AUKUS is the submarine angle and there is a pillar-2 which is other capabilities. There has been an announcement on submarines and it's big for everyone. It's difficult to say that within that construct, there is room for a fourth country," a diplomatic source said, and added, "It [submarine development] is about addressing and maintaining the strategic security balance in the Indo-Pacific."

"There is a pillar-2 for cooperation in technologies like electronic warfare, cyberspace and quantum, and under that, there is a room for more partners," the source said.

The triad: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak, U.S. President Joe Biden and Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese meet as part of AUKUS, at Point Loma naval base in San Diego. AP

Recently, the three AUKUS partners announced their implementation plan to equip Australia with SSN class nuclear attack submarines.

Under this, Australia will receive at least three second-hand SSNs from the U.S. in the 2030s as an interim measure, and five new SSNs to be designed and developed by the U.K. from the early 2040s to the late 2050s.

Quad summit

In May, Australia will host the Quad leaders' summit involving India, Australia, Japan and the U.S., where the recent implementation roadmap is expected to come up during discussions.

On the possible conversation between the AUKUS and the Quad, diplomatic sources said the former has no implications for the latter.

AUKUS is not a North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) for the Indo-Pacific. Rather, it is focused on technology and is very specific about developing strategically important capabilities to maintain stability, a diplomatic source said. On the other hand, the Quad is a broader collaboration at the political level.

Official sources too stated that cooperation between India and the U.S. on such a sensitive technology as the SSN is unlikely, given the U.S. regulatory frameworks and India's strategic autonomy.

India has its own indigenous programme for the design and development of SSNs, which will give the Indian Navy unlimited endurance underwater.

India is currently looking at procuring six advanced conventional submarines to arrest its depleting submarine strength, and also speeding up its SSN programme.

Engine development

Separately, both U.S. and the U.K. are in the race to co-develop a fighter jet engine with India and France. With the General Electric GE-414 engine having already been selected to power the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA)-MK2, the American government is currently considering an application from General Electric to license-manufacture the engine in India.

Making a strong pitch for the Rolls-Royce proposal at Aero India in February, the U.K.'s Minister for Defence Procurement Alex Chalk said the jet engine cooperation proposal put forward was the best "out there" and "most cost-effective" that "would set India apart".

"What the U.K. is committed to is the our biggest ever capability transfer in our history. We would be providing more capability than to any other ally – a G-7 country, G-20 country or Five Eyes country," he said.

MGNREGS wage rates revised by up to 10% for 2023-24 fiscal year

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The wage hikes, ranging from ₹7 to ₹26, will come into effect from April 1

The government has notified an increase in wage rates under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for the financial year 2023-24, with Haryana having the highest daily wage at ₹357 and Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh the lowest at ₹221.

The Union Ministry of Rural Development issued a notification on the change in the wage rates on March 24. The wage hikes, which range from ₹7 to ₹26, will come into effect from April 1.

Compared with last year's rates, Rajasthan registered the highest percentage increase in wages. The revised wage for Rajasthan is ₹255, up from ₹231 in 2022-23.

Bihar and Jharkhand have registered a percentage increase of around eight from last year's. Last year, the daily wage for an MGNREGS worker in these two States was ₹210. It has now been revised to ₹228.

For Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, which have the lowest daily wages at ₹221, the percentage increase from last year was recorded at 17. In 2022-23, the two States had a daily wage of ₹204. The increases in the wages range between 2% and 10%. Karnataka, Goa, Meghalaya and Manipur are among the States to register the lowest percentage increase.

Air India and Nepal Airlines aircraft come close to a collision

Press Trust of India
KATHMANDU

A major tragedy was averted on Friday when an Air India and a Nepal Airlines aircraft came close to collision mid-air, but the warning systems alerted the pilots whose timely action prevented a disaster, authorities said here on Sunday.

The Civil Aviation Authority of Nepal (CAAN) has suspended three employees of the air traffic control department for "carelessness".

On Friday morning, the Airbus A-320 aircraft of Nepal Airlines was coming to Kathmandu from Kuala Lumpur and the Air India plane was coming to Kathmandu from New Delhi.

The Air India aircraft was descending from 19,000 feet, while the Nepal Airlines aircraft was flying at an altitude of 15,000 feet at the same location, CAAN spokesperson Jagannath Niroula said.

The Air India flight from New Delhi was on its way to Kathmandu.

After the radar showed that the two aircraft were in proximity, the Nepal Airlines aircraft descended to 7,000 feet, the spokesperson said. A three-member committee has been formed to investigate the matter.

Centre warns officers for overstaying

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

The Centre has warned officers overstaying their deputation, including foreign posting, of disciplinary action.

In the latest order, the Department of Personnel and Training has asked all Central government Ministries and departments to review the status of the deputation cases.

Rajasthan Urban Drinking Water Sewerage and Infrastructure Corporation Ltd.
(A Government of Rajasthan Undertaking)
Old Working Women Hostel, Behind Nehru Place, LalKothi, Tonk Road, Jaipur
Ph: 0141- 2742240, 2742538, 2742263 E-mail: ruifdco@gmail.com, Web: urban.rajasthan.gov.in/rudsico

F18 (52) RUDSICO/AMRUT-2.0/2022-23/Tender/2463 Date :- 13/03/2023

NIB No. 13/2022-23
Notice inviting online bids for Rejuvenation of Water Body Projects under AMRUT-2.0

RUDSICO, Jaipur invites online unconditional bids through e-procurement portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** from eligible firms in accordance with the RTPP Act 2012 and RTPP Rules 2013, amended up to date and under Competitive Bidding with single stage-two envelope Bidding for the work of Rejuvenation of Water Body Projects in Churu & Sanchore, Rajasthan under AMRUT-2.0 projects of center and state Government, which are being uploaded from 21.03.2023 on e-procurement portal **http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** for the following works:

Rejuvenation of water Bodies(Budget Ghoshna 2023-24)

S. No.	Name of Towns	Name of Water body	Cost (in Lakh)	Bid Security (in Lakh)	Period of Completion
1.	Churu	Rejuvenation of Johari Sagar	1713.90	34.28	12 Months
2.	Sanchore	Beautification of pond and park at Borla pond	285.00	5.70	

The details of NIB can be seen at e-procurement portal of state government and **sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** and **eproc.rajasthan.gov.in** from date 21.03.2023 at 1700 hours till the end date i.e. 24.04.2023 up to 1800 Hrs.

Any subsequent addendum/corrigendum shall be published on the Procurement portal of state government **sppp.rajasthan.gov.in** and **eproc.rajasthan.gov.in**.

NIB Code : RDP2223A0072, UBN No. RDP2223WLOB00207, RDP2223WLOB00208

Raj.Samwad/C/22/16759 Executive Director, RUDSICO

WEST BENGAL STATE ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of West Bengal Enterprise)
WBSETCL Registered Office: Vidyut Bhavan,Block-DJ, Sector-II, Bidhannagar, Kolkata-700 091
CIN: U40101WB2007SGC113474 • web: www.wbsetcl.in

THE CHIEF ENGINEER (PROCUREMENT) INVITES E-TENDER FOR THE FOLLOWING WORKS:-

NIT No.: CE(P)/ WBSETCL/200 MVA Trf./22-23/30 Date: 27.03.2023	Procurement of 200 MVA, 220/132/33 kV Power Transformers and other associated works of WBSETCL as defined in the bid document. Bid documents can be downloaded from **27.03.2023, 11:00 A.M.** and bids shall be submitted online up to **04:00 P.M., 26.04.2023.**	
NIT No.: CE(P)/ WBSETCL/ Cables/22-23/31 Date: 27.03.2023	Procurement of Power and Control Cables. Bid documents can be downloaded from **27.03.2023, 02:00 P.M.**	Bids shall be submitted online up to **04:00 P.M., 25.04.2023.**
NIT No.: CE(P)/ WBSETCL/50 MVA Trf./22-23/32 Date: 27.03.2023	Procurement of 50 MVA,132/33 kV Power Transformers. Bid documents can be downloaded from **27.03.2023, 11:00 A.M.**	

Visit the following websites:- **https://wbtenders.gov.in, https://etender.wb.nic.in** and **https://www.wbsetcl.in** for details. ICA-T6439(3)/2023

कार्यालय अधीक्षण अभियन्ता, सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग वृत्त जालोर
क्रमांक :अअ/वृत्त/जा/2022-23/3365 दिनांक: 16.03.2023
निविदा सूचना संख्या :10 वर्ष 2022-2023
NIB No. PWD2223A4710

राजस्थान के राज्यपाल महोदय की ओर से माननीय मुख्यमंत्री महोदय बजट घोषणा वर्ष 2023-24 के अन्तर्गत स्वीकृत विभिन्न सड़कों के निर्माण कार्य (दोष निवारण अवधि 5 वर्ष सहित) हेतु उपयुक्त श्रेणी में सार्वजनिक निर्माण विभाग राजस्थान में पंजीकृत संवेदकों एवं राज्य सरकार/ केन्द्र सरकार के अधिकृत संगठनों / केन्द्रीय लोक निर्माण विभाग /डाक एवम् दूर संचार विभाग /रेलवे इत्यादि में पंजीकृत संवेदकों, जो कि राजस्थान सरकार के उपयुक्त श्रेणी के संवेदकों के समकक्ष हो, से निर्धारित प्रपत्र में कुल **10 पैकेज** कार्य जिनकी लागत राशि **रु. 2230.45** लाख है, अतः उक्त कार्यों लिए ईटेण्डरिंग प्रक्रिया हेतु ऑनलाईन निविदायें आमंत्रित की जाती है।

ऑनलाईन निविदा आवेदन डाउनलोड एवं अपलोड करने की तारीख	:	17 मार्च 2023, 9:30 बजे से 5 अप्रेल 2023, सायं 06:00 बजे तक

निविदा से सम्बन्धित विवरण वेब साईट **http://dipr.rajasthan.gov.in** व http://sppp.rajasthan.gov.in व http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर देखा जा सकता है। सम्पूर्ण निविदा प्रक्रिया http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर ऑनलाईन सम्पादित की जायेगी। इच्छुक संवेदकों को अपने डिजिटल हस्ताक्षर के माध्यम से वेबसाईट पर http://eproc.rajasthan.gov.in पर रजिस्टर्ड करवाना आवश्यक है।

NIB No. PWD2223A4710

क्र.सं.	यूबीएन नं.	क्र.सं.	यूबीएन नं.
1.	PWD2223WSOB18659	6.	PWD2223WSOB18668
2.	PWD2223WSOB18660	7.	PWD2223WSOB18669
3.	PWD2223WSOB18662	8.	PWD2223WSOB18670
4.	PWD2223WSOB18666	9.	PWD2223WSOB18671
5.	PWD2223WSOB18667	10.	PWD2223WSOB18672

(जयलाल मीना)
अधीक्षण अभियन्ता,सा.नि.वि. वृत्त, जालोर
मोबाईल 9414304714

DIPR/C/4438/2023

जवाहरलाल स्नातकोत्तर आयुर्विज्ञान शिक्षा एवं अनुसंधान संस्थान
JAWAHARLAL INSTITUTE OF POSTGRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION & RESEARCH
(स्वास्थ्य एवं परिवार कल्याण मंत्रालय, भारत सरकार के अधीन राष्ट्रीय महत्व का संस्थान)
(An Institution of National Importance under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Govt. of India)
धन्वंतरि नगर, पुदुच्चेरी / Dhanvantari Nagar, Puducherry- 605 006
Website: www.jipmer.edu.in / Phone: 0413 - 2296022

No.JIP/Admn-I/Dep./1(35)/PDY/2022 Dated : 27.03.2023

The Director, JIPMER, Puducherry invites application from eligible officers of Central / State / U.T. Governments / Statutory / Autonomous Bodies / Government Universities / Government Research and Development Organizations etc., for filling the various Group A, B & C posts on Deputation basis at JIPMER, Puducherry and various Group A & B posts on Deputation basis at JIPMER, Karaikal, given as under:

JIPMER, Puducherry

Sl.No.	Name of the post	Pay Level (7th CPC)	Vacancy
1	Registrar	Level-12	1
2	Senior Accounts Officer	Level-11	1
3	Senior Stores Officer	Level-11	1
4	System Analyst	Level-11	2
5	Assistant Controller of Examinations	Level-10	1
6	Computer Programmer	Level-10	1
7	Purchase Officer	Level-10	1
8	Assistant Registrar	Level-7	1
9	Superintendent (CSSD)	Level-7	1
10	Audiology cum Speech Therapist	Level-6	1
11	Computer Data Processor	Level-5	1
12	Foreman	Level-5	1

JIPMER, Karaikal

Sl.No.	Name of the post	Pay Level (7th CPC)	Vacancy
1	Registrar	Level-12	1
2	Assistant Controller of Examinations	Level-10	1
3	Assistant Registrar	Level-7	2

The format of the application, other details regarding pay scale, age, qualification, experience and other conditions of eligibility etc. for the above posts are available in the JIPMER website **"www.jipmer.edu.in"**.

The last date for receipt of filled-in application is **29.05.2023 till 4.30 P.M.**

DIRECTOR

INBRIEF

Amethi man who rescued Sarus crane gets notice

An Amethi resident, who rescued a Sarus crane and took care of it for a year, has received a notice from the Forest Department, summoning him for 11 a.m. on April 4. Arif Khan has been booked under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972. According to the notice sent on Saturday by Gauriganj's Assistant Forest Officer (AFO), he has been asked to appear before Sub-Divisional Forest Officer Ranvir Mishra. The Forest Department shifted the bird to the Samaspur sanctuary in Rae Bareli to allow it to live in its natural environment. Mr. Khan rescued the injured and unconscious bird from his field last year. "We took him to the fields, but the bird refused to leave us," Mr. Khan told *The Hindu*.

Farmers' body in Arunachal rejects 10,000-MW hydel plan

Two Arunachal Pradesh-based organisations, including a farmers' collective, have asked the State government to scrap a deal for executing a proposed 10,000-MW hydropower project on the Siang river. Flowing down from Tibet, the Siang is one of the three rivers that meet to form the Brahmaputra in Assam downstream. Accusing the government of inking a deal with the National Hydropower Power Corporation for the mega-dam without taking the local people into confidence, the Siang Indigenous Farmers' Forum (SIFF) and the Indigenous Rights Advocacy Dibang (IRAD) threatened to launch a stir if the project is not scrapped.

'9 held for giving shelter to 2005 murder case accused'

Nine people were arrested from Purkhas Yusufpur village in Kaushambi district of Uttar Pradesh on Sunday for allegedly giving shelter to an accused in the 2005 murder case of BSP MLA Raju Pal, a police official said. With these arrests, the number of people nabbed in the case has gone up to 19, the police said. Sources said the police action is being seen as a move to tighten the noose around gangster-turned- politician Atiq Ahmed. On Sunday, a police team from U.P. went to the Sabarmati jail in Ahmedabad, where Ahmed was lodged on a Supreme Court order, and brought him to Prayagraj. PTI

Remove converted tribal people from ST list: RSS outfit

An RSS-affiliated organisation representing ethnic communities adhering to indigenous faiths has asked the Centre to remove from the Scheduled Tribe (ST) list those who have undergone religious conversion. The Janajati Dharma Sanskriti Suraksha Mancha organised a massive rally in Guwahati on Sunday also to demand a ban on religious conversion of tribal people. "Conversion of tribal people in Assam and elsewhere in India to foreign religions has been a threat to indigenous faiths and cultures. The rate of conversion has increased and the ST people fall prey to communal theocratic foreign religious groups," Binud Kumbang of the JDSSM said.

ISRO puts 36 OneWeb satellites into orbit

Agency uses its heaviest payload rocket, LVM3, for the mission from Sriharikota; in its sixth flight, the vehicle used the upgraded S200 motors with enhanced margins suitable for the upcoming Gaganyaan mission; with the successful launch, OneWeb completes its constellation of 618 satellites

Sangeetha Kandavel
SRIHARIKOTA

With a roaring sound, LVM3, the heaviest payload rocket of the Indian Space Research Organisation carrying 36 OneWeb satellites on board, took off at 9.20 a.m. on Sunday from the second launch pad at the Satish Dhawan Space Centre here. The satellites separated successfully from the rocket and were dispensed in nine phases over an hour and 14 minutes, with signal acquisition on all 36 confirmed.

This is the second mission for Network Access Associates Ltd., U.K. (OneWeb Group Company) under a commercial agreement with NewSpace India Ltd. (NSIL) to launch 72 satellites into low-earth orbits (LEOs). The first set of 36 satellites was launched in the LVM3-M2/OneWeb India-1 mission on October 23, 2022. In the current mission, the 43.5-metre-tall vehicle weighing 643 tonnes was expected to place 36 OneWeb Gen-1 satellites totalling about 5,805 kg into a 450-km circular orbit with an inclination of 87.4 degrees. This is the sixth flight of LVM3. The rocket had five consecutive successful missions, including Chandrayaan-2.

"The first 16 satellites have already been placed in the right orbit," Somanath S., Secretary, Department of Space, and Chairman, ISRO, said from the control room.

He said the mission had the upgraded S200 motors with enhanced margins suitable for the upcoming Gaganyaan mission and the motors performed very well. In the coming months, the space agency was looking at a PSLV commercial mission in April, another GSLV-Mk3 for Chandrayaan-3 and a GSLV-Mk2 mission.

Sky is not the limit: The LVM3 rocket carrying 36 satellites lifts off from Sriharikota on Sunday. ISRO

Sunil Bharti Mittal, executive chairman of OneWeb and founder and chairman of Bharti Enterprises, in a Web call, said OneWeb is awaiting India's space communication policy and the policy on spectrum allocation to launch its services here. "In my work, I have seen the power of connectivity bring benefits to all, wherever they are. Yet half the world's population does not have access to fast, reliable connectivity. Today's launch represents a major step towards closing the digital divide. OneWeb's global constellation will play a pivotal role in realising this dream," he said.

Radhakrishnan D., Chairman-cum-Managing Director, NSIL, said it looked forward to be associated with OneWeb not only in the area of providing launch solutions but also in other business endeavours. "This launch is a significant milestone for India to move towards benefiting from remarkable capabilities of LEO connectivity and the spread of space-based Internet. This will surely aid in addressing the issue of low fixed broadband penetration and bridge the digital divide in the country's most remote areas," said A.K. Bhatt, Director General, Indian Space Association.

OneWeb is a global communication network powered from space, enabling connectivity for governments, businesses, and communities. It is implementing a constellation of LEO satellites. India's Bharti Enterprises serves as a major investor and shareholder in OneWeb. This is OneWeb's 18th launch, its third this year, bringing its constellation to 618 satellites. This launch is a major milestone for the company, with the number of satellites now in orbit enabling global service, the first LEO operator to reach this milestone.

'Hugely significant'

U.K. Secretary of State for Science, Innovation and Technology Michelle Donelan said: "The completion of the LEO constellation is hugely significant both for OneWeb and the U.K.'s wider sector. We invested in OneWeb's vision to bridge the global digital divide, and our burgeoning space sector is transforming the U.K. into the perfect base for like-minded companies to realise their stratospheric potential."

Astronauts selected for Gaganyaan complete first semester of crew training

The Hindu Bureau
BENGALURU

The four astronauts selected for India's first Human Space Flight Programme, Gaganyaan, have successfully completed the first semester of crew training.

The candidates, who are Indian Air Force (IAF) test pilots, have been undergoing Gaganyaan mission-specific training at the Astronaut Training Facility in Bengaluru. According to the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), the first semester of the crew training has been successfully completed and so far, 39 weeks of training activities have been completed.

They have been given 218 lectures by ISRO and Indian Institute of Science faculty and have undergone 75 physical training sessions. Besides two flying practice sessions for 12 hours have been completed along with medical and course evaluations. The candidates were shortlisted from a dozen pilots. They were sent to Russia in 2020, where they completed generic space flight training at the Gagarin Cosmonaut Training Centre. Upon their return in 2021, they have been undergoing training.

A Gaganyaan poster placed outside the Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium in Bengaluru. AFP

The mission-specific training in India includes theoretical courses in engineering disciplines and training on Gaganyaan flight systems. It also covers aero-medical training and fitness and recovery and survival training as part of the curriculum. Practical training on simulators and flight procedures will also be imparted, the ISRO said. The courses in engineering, such as basics of space flight, propulsion and aerodynamics, and courses in launch vehicles and spacecraft were conducted.

Physical training, yoga, aero-medical training, and flying practice are being conducted as part of the training curriculum, besides virtual reality and independent training simulators were used for familiarisation with crew module systems. The courses in Gaganyaan flight systems are being conducted, said the space agency.

The Gaganyaan project envisages demonstration of human space flight capability by launching a crew of three members to an orbit of 400 km for a three-day mission and bringing them back safely to earth, by landing in Indian sea waters.

'Willkommen,' children of a Beed village greet visitors in fluent German

Abhinay Deshpande
BEED

On a hot Friday morning at a government upper primary school in drought-hit Beed district of Maharashtra, over two dozen students from Classes 7 to 9 are seated on colourful mats on the floor of their classroom, eagerly waiting for the clock to strike 11.

Soon, Kedar Jadhav, 39, a native of Sangli district who works at a multinational company in Munich, Germany, appears on their projector screen and begins taking lessons in German.

The students have created a flutter in their village, Umrad Khalsa, by rattling off full sentences in the foreign language, much to the astonishment of residents. Located around 12 km from Beed town, the village did not have much to boast about, but now their children are making heads turn.

"At a time when Marathi medium students are struggling to speak English fluently, our students are honing their German language skills," says Vikas Mahendra Pardeshi, the school's headmaster.

A way with words: Fifteen of the 186 students in the school have have achieved basic conversational proficiency. ABHINAY DESHPANDE

Last November, Mr. Pardeshi was scrolling through his Facebook feed when he chanced upon a video of Mr. Jadhav teaching German. "I immediately messaged him and requested him to teach the language to our students. Mr. Jadhav readily agreed and our first online class began on November 26," the headmaster says, adding that classes are held every Tuesday and Friday.

Basic proficiency

Fifteen of the school's 186 students have now completed the A1 level and have achieved basic conversational proficiency. "It is so exciting to learn new words and remember them," says Arthi Vinod Jadhav, a Class 8 student.

Raj Sonawane, a Class 7 student, says he revises his lessons even on holidays. "I have already done my homework and am waiting for the next task," he says.

Prachi Prabhakar Paraskar, a Class 8 student, says they play games trying to form small sentences with the new words they pick up in each class.

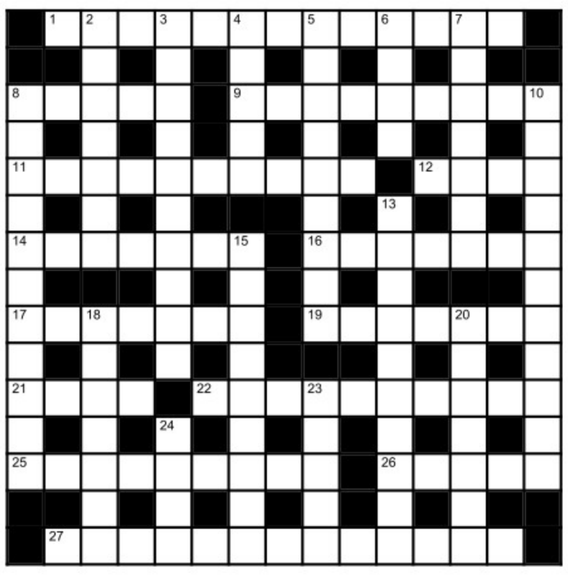
Mr. Jadhav says he started learning German at the Goethe-Institut in Pune. He became more proficient in the language after moving to Germany. He says he aims to teach German in rural schools.

TH CROSSWORD + 13823

(set by Dr. X)

To solve this puzzle online, get across to our crossword site. @ https://qrgo.page.link/jjpTn

SCAN TO PLAY



Across

1 Rotten article by Conservative spreading silly pipe dream (6,2,5)
8 Girl enthralled by wine, going topless in expensive bar (5)
9 Basic reason versatile actor accepts ordinary role (4,5)
11 Vociferous supporter of strike in plant (3-7)
12 Resign in disgrace, devastated (4)
14 One helping climbers instructed to protect old man coming back (7)
16 Writes novel inside, taking time (7)
17 Entering incorrect number leaves number that is not a fraction (7)
19 Face of beauty captivates single male (7)
21 Parrot going around small recess in church (4)
22 Frantically appeals to save mother getting lump in the throat (5,5)
25 Rescued from deep river precariously (9)
26 Woman in Swiss town kills husband finally and confesses (5)
27 Exorbitant, astonishing resale involving champion racehorse (13)

Down

2 Member wanting book, good book that's easy to read (7)
3 Pass by ghetto, largely demolished by bully (3,7)
4 Beginning to titter with hard liquor giving buzz (5)
5 Well, drug cartel's thriving (9)
6 Car crashed on top of Howrah bridge (4)
7 Most obscene film about heartless demagogue (7)
8 Where climber ascending Mt Everest has gone without a trace (4,4,3)
10 Perfectly matched girl and boy in Netherlands on vacation (4-7)
13 Dad is cooking a sponge cake in African capital (5,5)
15 Reckless lad grieved about losing girl (9)
18 Drunkard turning drunk, starting to smoke cannabis (7)
20 Like a very quiet stroll (7)
23 Doctor crushed by suicide, most upset (5)
24 Ultimately, road rage is disastrous (4)

SUDOKU

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	3	7				6	2	
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		5			8		1	

No.SS5750 Distribution: www.knightfeatures.com

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Solution to previous puzzle

F	U	G	I	T	I	V	E	
L		A		H		A		A
A	G	R	E	E		R	A	D
N		I		R		N		A
G	I	B	B	E	R	I	N	G
E		A		S		S		I
	B	L	E	N	C	H		O
A		D		O				
B	R	I	S	T	O	L		I
R				E		E		N
E	Q	U	A	L		E	N	U
A		S		L		W		T
C	H	A	R	I	V	A	R	I
T		G		N		Y		L
S	L	E	I	G	H		L	E

C	A	S	B	A	H			
G		L		L		O		
R	A	D	I	A	T	I	O	N
I		M		E				
N	A	P	P	Y				
S				D				
O	B	T	R	U	D	E		
T		N		W				
I	N	H	O	C	K			
E		E		D				
N	U	N	C	I	A	T	E	
L		S		T				
O	G	I	V	E				
C		N		R				
E	A	K	A	G	E	S		

Solution to yesterday's Sudoku

2	4	6	9	3	8	1	7	5
8	9	1	5	7	6	2	3	4
7	3	5	2	4	1	9	6	8
1	5	3	6	9	4	7	8	2
4	8	2	1	5	7	6	9	3
9	6	7	8	2	3	5	4	1
3	7	9	4	1	2	8	5	6
5	2	8	3	6	9	4	1	7
6	1	4	7	8	5	3	2	9

FAITH

Ways to navigate karma

It is fairly common to hear people complain about their lot in life. One consoles such outbursts by saying, "It's our karma, we cannot escape it." Karma is a universally acknowledged word worldwide. People everywhere immediately associate it with Sanathana Dharma and proclaim none can escape it, but there are ways to navigate it, said P. Swaminathan in a discourse.

What is karma? It is nothing but the ledger balance of one's deeds in past life. It is human nature to do both good and bad things in this world.

While the good deeds earn us a bonus of prosperity in the next birth, the wrong things we did to others will attach themselves to our life in the next birth. As Lord Krishna says in the Bhagavad Gita, one will get only what one is ordained to get, in this birth.

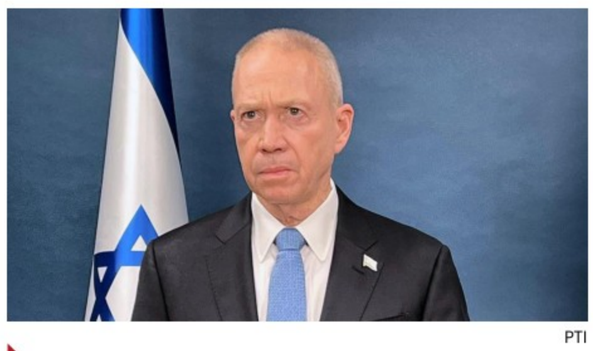
How does one mitigate the effects of karma? Kanchi Mahaperiyava was known to say that there are three ways one can do this. First is to have bhakti, think of God every day, recite prayers , make offerings and visit places of worship. Next, pay homage to the ancestors, and lastly, pay heed to the elders in the family.

By doing so, one can somewhat reduce the impact of the bad deeds of our past birth, just as how we protect ourselves from driving rain by donning a rain coat.

One must remember that even gods cannot completely wipe out your karma deficit. Goddess Parvathy once pleaded with Siva to improve the lot of a poor cotton candy seller, as he was an upright person in his current birth. Siva sportingly showed Her how wrong She was. Do your duty and lead a virtuous life for a better life and after life.

TEL AVIV

Netanyahu fires Defence Minister for urging halt to judicial overhaul



PTI

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fired his Defence Minister, a day after Yoav Gallant called for a halt to the planned overhaul of Israel's judiciary that has divided the country. The move signals the Prime Minister will move ahead this week with plans for the overhaul, which has sparked widespread opposition. AP

NAIROBI

Kenya police chief issues fresh ban on 'violent' protests by Opposition

AFP

Kenya's police chief announced a ban on fresh Opposition protests called for Monday, after demonstrations last week degenerated into riots. "We will not allow violent demonstrations. The protests they plan tomorrow (Monday) are illegal and will not be allowed," he said. But Opposition leader Raila Odinga has remained defiant. AFP

ASHGABAT

Turkmenistan holds parliament election under its ruling family

AFP

Turkmenistan held the first parliamentary polls since the ruling family tightened its iron grip on the country that does not tolerate political dissent. The new President took power after a hereditary succession in 2022, and the vote comes after the abolition of the legislature's Upper House and the creation of a supreme body. AFP

HONG KONG

Hong Kong citizens stage first protest in years under strict rules

AP

Dozens of people on Sunday joined Hong Kong's first authorised protest since the lifting of major COVID norms under strict rules, including wearing a numbered badge around their necks. The rules set out by the police came as the financial hub was returning to normalcy after years of anti-virus controls and political turmoil. AP

Honduras establishes ties with China leaving Taiwan with fewer partners

The Central American nation joins the likes of Nicaragua, Panama and Costa Rica in recognising Beijing and ending ties with Taipei; Taiwan officials hit out at the move, say it has been triggered by financial reasons

Ananth Krishnan
BEIJING

New friends: Honduras Foreign Minister Eduardo Enrique Reina Garcia, left, with his Chinese counterpart Qin Gang in Beijing. AP

China and Honduras on Sunday signed a landmark communique to formally establish diplomatic relations, with the Central American nation becoming the latest country to switch recognition from Taipei to Beijing.

Sunday's agreement signed in Beijing between the two Foreign Ministers said "the two Governments have decided to recognise each other and establish diplomatic relations at the ambassadorial level, effective from the date of signature of this communiqué."

"There is but one China in the world and the Government of the People's Republic of China is the sole legal Government representing the whole of China," it added. "Taiwan is an inalienable part of China's territory."

Honduras, the agreement said, "chooses to stand with 181 countries in the world, recognise and undertake to adhere to the one-China principle, sever the so-called 'diplomatic relations' with Taiwan, establish diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, and undertake that Honduras shall no longer develop any official relations or official exchanges with Taiwan."

The agreement now leaves a dwindling number of diplomatic partners for Taiwan, with Honduras joining Nicaragua, Panama and Costa Rica in recently recognising Beijing and ending ties with Taipei.

The only remaining among the 193 member countries of the UN that maintain diplomatic relations with Taiwan, along with the Holy See (Vatican), are the Marshall Islands, Nauru, Tuvalu, and Palau in the Pacific; Eswatini in Africa; and Belize, Guatemala, Haiti, Paraguay, St. Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and Saint Kitts and Nevis, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Reason for breakdown

Taipei hit out at the move, with a statement from the office of President Tsai Ing-wen saying China had "suppressed the international space" of Taiwan. Officials in Taipei said financial reasons were behind the switch, and Honduras had asked Taiwan for financial assistance as a condition to continue relations.

Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who began his third five-year term as President earlier this month, reiterated at the annual session of the National People's Congress (NPC) or Parliament that the Taiwan issue was a red line for China.

Mr. Xi, and previous Chinese leaders, have said they will pursue "peaceful reunification" but will not rule out the use of force. Chinese officials, at the NPC, also warned the U.S. against interference in Taiwan.

"Realising China's complete reunification is a shared aspiration of all the sons and daughters of the Chinese nation as well as the essence of national rejuvenation," Mr. Xi said.

"We should implement the [Communist] Party's overall policy for resolving the Taiwan question in the new era, uphold the one-China principle and the 1992 Consensus, actively promote the peaceful development of cross-Strait relations, resolutely oppose foreign interference and separatist activities aimed at 'Taiwan independence,' and unswervingly promote progress towards national reunification."

At Texas rally, Trump brushes aside criminal probe against him by calling it a witch hunt

Agence France-Presse
WACO

Same tune: Donald Trump speaks as part of the 2024 election campaign rally in Waco in Texas on Saturday. AFP

Former U.S. President Donald Trump staged his first presidential campaign rally in Texas on Saturday, brushing off his potential indictment as he railed against multiple criminal probes threatening his bid for the White House.

The Republican addressed several thousand supporters – far fewer than the 15,000 he had expected – in the city of Waco as he braced for possible charges over a hush-money payout just days before the 2016 election, to a porn star alleging a sexual encounter.

Maintaining the investigation was over "something that is not a crime, not a misdemeanor, not an affair," Mr. Trump told supporters how he had been the victim of "one witch hunt and phony investigation after another."

The former President has made a torrent of increasingly bellicose statements, claiming "misconduct" by prosecutors he refers to as "human scum" who are pursuing cases against him in New York, Washington and Atlanta.

The 76-year-old – who was impeached for inciting an insurrection – called last weekend for protests against Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg, and claimed falsely that he was about to be arrested.

"This is really prosecutorial misconduct. That's what it's called. The innocence of people makes no difference whatsoever to these radical left maniacs," he told an enthusiastic crowd.

Symbolic location

Mr. Trump's choice of Waco for his rally was laden with symbolism – the city is marking the 30th anniversary of a deadly standoff between an anti-government cult and federal agents, and has become a touchstone for far-right fringe activists glorying in its history of government resistance.

Kyiv seeks UN meet after Russia's 'nuclear blackmail' in Belarus

Agence France-Presse
KYIV

Kyiv on Sunday said it was seeking an emergency meeting of the United Nation's Security Council to counter Russia's "nuclear blackmail" after President Vladimir Putin announced his country would station tactical nuclear arms in Belarus.

Mr. Putin said the deployment was similar to moves from the U.S., which stores such weapons in bases across Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Turkey, an analogy western allies called "misleading".

"Ukraine expects effective actions to counteract the Kremlin's nuclear blackmail from the United Kingdom, China, the United States and France," the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry said. "We demand that an extraordinary meeting of the UN Security Council be immediately convened."

No evidence

Secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defence Council, Oleksiy Danilov wrote on Twitter that "the Kremlin took Belarus as a nuclear hostage."

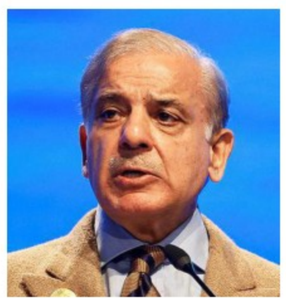
Meanwhile, National Security Council spokesman John Kirby said the U.S. has seen no indication that Russia has yet moved any nuclear weapons into Belarus.

The French fissure

Dissent billows: Protesters in France attend a demonstration called by the collective "Bassines Non Merci" against the "basins" on the construction site of a new water storage infrastructure for agricultural irrigation in in Sainte-Soline in western France on Saturday. The incident comes after days of violent protests nationwide over President Emmanuel Macron's pension reform. REUTERS

Pakistan PM accuses President Arif Alvi of following PTI mandate

Press Trust of India
ISLAMABAD



Shehbaz Sharif

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday hit back at President Arif Alvi, accusing him of being partisan and following the dictates of his Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party instead of remaining neutral as the head of the state.

His comments came two days after President Alvi, in a letter on Friday, accused the Prime Minister of using disproportionate force against politicians, political workers and journalists in recent clashes with former Prime Minister Imran Khan's PTI.

Mr. Alvi, who was a member of Mr. Khan's party before assuming the office of the President, had also asked Mr. Sharif to direct all authorities to assist the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in holding the Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa elections as per the orders of the Supreme Court of the country.

Did Moore's law predict the world or define it?

Vasudevan Mukunth

"Coordinating concept" – these are among the many words historian of science and technology Cyrus Mody used to describe Moore's law in 2015, to commemorate 50 years of the tenet. By them, Dr. Mody, now at Maastricht University in the Netherlands, meant to say that one of the things that kept the law going was the law itself, creating a form of self-fulfilling prophecy. The businessman and engineer for whom the law is named, Gordon Moore, co-founder of Intel Corporation, passed away on March 24.

In 1965, Dr. Moore observed that the number of transistors on an integrated circuit (IC) would double every year. A decade later, he revised it to say the number would double approximately every two years. Since then, as many reports, articles, and books have documented, this Moore's law was found true: the number of transistors on an IC did increase in that fashion.

But part of this growth, which precipitated the 20th century's digital revolution, owed itself to many people and industries being guided by Moore's law instead of the prediction naturally coming true. In the 1950s and 1960s, more than a few scientists and engineers found that making the components of a computing system smaller also made it more efficient.

Later, working with Moore, Carver Mead found that if the size of a microchip was reduced by some factor, its efficiency improved by the cube of that

Gordon Moore

factor – an exponential gain. Where there is exponential gain, there is rapid advance to be had. And where there are rapid advances, the future becomes harder to predict.

As *Wired* cofounder Kevin Kelly wrote in 2009, "expectations of future progress guide current investments". How should we define these expectations? Enter Moore's law, playing the role of a "coordinating concept". At a time when many things seemed possible, Moore's law gave the semiconductor industry a way to set targets; it told governments and militaries where to invest and how much. Adenekan Dedeke, an expert in supply chain and information management, wrote in 2022 that the law "helps software developers to anticipate, broadly speaking, how much bigger their software releases should be."

To rephrase Dr. Mody, "the producers and consumers of microelectronics" believed they were at the mercy of the law, but in truth they were actively maintaining it. The law practically defined expectations even as it aged with the world, and age it did. The slope of the Moore's law curve is flagging. The CEO of Intel said in 2015 that the company's "cadence" had dropped from the two years of Moore's law to two-and-half. Chips are beginning to come up against material limits, such as the paucity of metals with suitable electronic properties, fabrication costs, and heat dissipation, encouraging the industry to look past silicon, transistors and, fundamentally, the idea that even smaller is better. The time has come, it would seem, for a new "coordinating concept".

Kamala Harris in Ghana on African tour

Agence France-Presse
ACCRA

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris arrived in Ghana on Sunday at the start of a three-nation African tour, as Washington looks to strengthen diplomatic ties on the continent. The trip to Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia until April 2 comes with focus on Africa, a continent where China and Russia are enjoying rising influence.

ASKUS

BHAVANA ACHARYA

Q I have been investing in two SIPs of ₹2,000 each from April 2021 (Parag Parikh Flexi Cap) & May 2021 (Axis Bluechip). So far, the total invested amount is ₹78,097. The recent returns in the Flexi Cap fund is 4% (₹1,580) and Bluechip fund (-) 4.23% (₹1,629). The overall return is ₹(-)41. How can I improve the returns?
HARI SRIKAR

A When you look at returns of a mutual fund, you need to look at the market as well. Equity markets have been flat over 2022 and have been correcting over the past few months as well. This reflects in fund performance as well; an equity fund can hardly deliver outstanding returns when stocks are going through a sharp correction. To give context, a SIP in the Nifty 50 index in the same period as your SIP would have delivered a 2.2% return. A SIP in the wide-market Nifty 500 index would have returned 0.75%. Stock market corrections and volatility are par for the course; for every downward market phase, there will also be a recovery. The risk in equity investing lies in this volatility and is something you need to be willing to hold investments through.
So, as long as your fund is a quality long-term performer and beats its benchmark index, you should continue to invest in it. To invest in equity funds, you need to have at least a 5-7 year timeframe and be prepared for losses or low returns in that time. SIPs in correcting markets are very useful in investing when prices are low - bringing down your costs and therefore, improving returns when markets recover.

Q I am a Central government staff with an in-hand salary of ₹51,000 and aged 27. I want to construct a house with ₹20 lakh in the next 2-3 years. I have an SIP of ₹15,000 in the following funds:
1) Navi Nifty 50 ₹3,000
2) Mirae Asset Tax Saver ₹4,000
3) Axis Small Cap ₹3,000
4) Quant Tax Plan ₹2,000
5) SBI Focused Equity ₹1,000.
I have ₹1,20,000 in fixed deposits. Please help in rebalancing the MFs.
NITIN MAURYA

A If you intend to use the funds to construct a house in the next 2-3 years, they are not suitable unless you have already been investing in them for at least 3-4 years. For one, equity funds are best used for medium to long-term goals only as they can be volatile in shorter-term periods; market returns in the past couple of years have been flat.
Second, two are tax-saver funds which have lock-ins. Every SIP instalment will be locked in for 3 years. You may thus be unable to access much of this investment if you need it in 2-3 years. Third, close to half the funds are high-risk, tilting towards mid-cap and small-cap stocks or that have aggressive strategies. This is an extremely high allocation that leaves your portfolio more vulnerable to market corrections. This holds true regardless of your timeframe and even if you do not plan to use these investments for your house.
So, unless you push the planned construction by at least 2-3 more years, its best to divert at least part of your monthly investment into safer avenues. Check which of the old or new tax regimes will minimise your tax outgo. Then, invest in a mix of fixed deposits (especially if you do not have to bear taxes or you are in the lowest tax bracket), debt mutual funds, and hybrid funds such as balanced advantage or equity savings funds.
If you don't intend to use these funds for construction, you still need to reduce the risk. Consolidate tax saver funds into one, and re-allocate the SIPs in the aggressive funds into the Nifty 50 index.
The writer is Co-founder, PrimeInvestor.in)

Send queries on personal finance and investing to the moneywise@thehindu.co.in ID. Our experts in personal finance will respond to select queries, but will not give specific recommendations for investment in a particular mutual fund, share or fixed deposit.

Fed's rate increases and unintended consequences

Persistent inflation signals the Federal Reserve has its work cut out over the next few months regarding rate increases. A hawkish stance comes with unintended consequences

INTEREST RATES

Anand Srinivasan
Sashwath Swaminathan

> No asset is risk-free, and one should always factor in scenarios which seem unlikely or impossible but can wipe you out whole if they occur

> To weather the storm, one must be careful in living within one's means and working on a nest egg by indexing in the stock market

The Federal Reserve began raising rates in March last year (2022) and has consistently pushed the federal funds rate since.

In May 2022, it announced the most significant rate increase since May 2000 to tackle rising inflation. Over the past year, the Fed has pushed the discount rate from 0.25% to 5.0%. This has been an unprecedented increase in interest rates to fight inflation and address the concerns regarding a tight labour market.

Positive real rates

Over the past year, the inflation rate has steadily declined from 9% to 6%, but according to multiple economists, there must be positive real rates for inflation to be genuinely tackled. Persistent inflation signals the Federal Reserve has its work cut out over the next few months regarding rate increases. However, a robust hawkish stance comes with inevitable unintended consequences which must be accounted for.

The immediate result of an increase in interest rates comes from asset prices being discounted at a higher rate. A higher interest rate signals markets to demand higher rates of return from their assets which causes prices to drop to accommodate the demand for higher rates. U.S. treasury securities, reputed to be the safest asset in the world, are not immune to the rapid rise in interest rates. The U.S. 10-year and 30-year treasury securities holders have are staring at severe unrealised losses in asset holdings due to the increase in interest rates. A direct consequence of this decline in asset price is the collapse of the Silicon Valley Bank and Signature Bank.

Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) had 55% of all its assets in securities leading to them facing a total unrealized loss of more than $18 billion. Typically, unrealised losses do not necessarily signify a bank's impending collapse.

However, SVB also possessed a measly 2.5% of assets in cash compared with other banks in the U.S. A bank-depositor run forces a bank to either liquidate assets or raise funds to pay off depositors. SVB was forced to realise its losses on the treasury bills it held, destroying capital and putting them in severe trouble and at risk of collapse.

A famous investor, Howard Marks, popularised the metaphor of a six-foot man drowning while crossing a stream that was five feet deep on an average. The metaphor lends itself to this case where the U.S. treasury securities are safe assets if one has the liberty to hold them.

No risk-free asset

Mr. Marks also states that no asset is risk-free, and one should always factor in scenarios which seem unlikely or impossible but can wipe you out whole if they occur.

On the other hand, one cannot ignore the spillover effects of the Federal Reserve's hawkish stance on India. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is also forced to keep up with the Fed and raise rates. The reason for this is twofold:

1) A significant enough interest rate disparity would lead to a depreciating currency making imports expensive and leading to runaway inflation.

2) India faces an inflationary problem of its own and requires rate increases regardless of the actions of the Federal Reserve. Banks' lending rates must rise to keep up with the RBI to maintain their net interest margin.

The State Bank of India has consistently raised its teaser housing loan rate from a low of 6.75% during 2021 to 8.5% as of March 2023. Although this jump may not seem drastic, it is possible to illustrate the gravity of the hike through a numeric example. If one borrows ₹1 crore at 6.75% with a tenure of 20 years, the EMI works out to be ₹76,036 a month. However, with an interest rate of 8.5%, the tenure taken to repay the loan at the same EMI level is about 31 years.

Now, if we were to allow rates to rise to 9% (a reasonable expectation considering rising interest rates), the tenure taken to pay back the loan goes up to about 45 years.

This is the potent effect of compounding visualised by the famous investor Charlie Munger. Moreover, interest rate increase signals wage decreases and impending job losses.

Therefore, it is difficult for those with EMIs to continue to maintain their standard of living in current times. Such times remind us that loans and EMIs are not a panacea which guarantees a greater quality of life for those on salaries. To weather the storm, one must be careful in living within means and working on a nest egg by indexing in the stock market. Additionally, paying off any EMIs which one has and not purchasing any goods or assets through debt is crucial.

(Anand Srinivasan is a consultant and Sashwath Swaminathan is a research assistant at Aionion Investment Services)

Options, yes, but for whom?

COVERNOTE

Buying a new car can be exhilarating but purchasing insurance can be frustrating with car dealers thrusting unilateral decisions on the customer and not letting him do the choosing

K. Nitya Kalyani

I bought a new car with lovely safety and tech features. Thank you, yes, it's a nice car! Feels as if it can run itself. Before I could explore that, I found the insurance process ran itself!

Car dealers offer insurance as corporate agencies of multiple insurance firms. The tie up could be for all dealers of a manufacturer, or a large dealership chain. They earn a commission for selling and renewal of insurance and negotiate rates and terms for claims repairs, the latter much like hospitalisation insurance and network hospitals.

Bundled services

Bundled services present advantages and disadvantages to us as customers. They will tell you in detail about the advantages, but let me tell you about at least some disadvantages that I encountered during the process.

I asked, indeed, about insurance. It could be one of the three firms. Their quotes, as well as one from my own insurance agent who represented a different firm, were comparable. But the dealer option was structured as a seamless service with their in-house, authorised workshop handling repairs and their in-house insurance team, claims. So, I opted for the latter. A late evening email from the insurance team asked me in bold letters upfront to click 'AGREE' or 'DISAGREE'. To what? Inside the message was a proposal form for the car insurance. Various options were pre-checked and the insurance company pre-decided! It had other unspeakable errors including mis-spelling my name, getting my gender and nomination information wrong.

The sales team smoothly pointed me to the insurance team who would be available only the next day. But within minutes landed an email from the RTO team. It was a CC of an online application for registration of the vehicle with the same cover note, not yet 'AGREE'd to, for a three-year third-party liability insurance. I wanted the insurer to be changed. The RTO and sales team huffed smoothly that this would mean a delay and MY desired registration date would not be met! The options, apparently, aren't always for the customer to exercise! I got my option of insurer, but a delayed delivery of the car. Wearied, I decided not to bring up the fact that the policy failed to give me a discount for automobile association membership, something the motor tariff specifies. They were nice enough about some other options though. They spent half-a-day helping me pick out accessories from their pricey list!

(The writer is a business journalist specialising in insurance & corporate history)

Personal Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	Loan amount 1 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
HDFC Bank	10.50 onwards	10,747 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to Rs 4,999
Citi Bank	10.75 onwardS	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3%
Tata Capital	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
ICICI Bank	10.75 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 2.50%
Bank of Baroda	10.90-18.25	10,846-12,765	2,169-2,553	Up to 2% (Min Rs 1,000 and Max Rs 10,000)
State Bank of India	11.00-15.00	10,871-11,895	2,174-2,379	Up to 1.50% (Rs 1,000-Rs 15,000)
Axis Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 2%
Kotak Mahindra Bank	10.99 onwards	10,869 onwards	2,174 onwards	Up to 3%
Bank of India	10.35-14.85	10,710-11,856	2,142-2,371	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 5,000)
Canara Bank	11.75-16.25	11,059-12,226	2,212-2,445	Up to 1%
Punjab National Bank	10.40-16.95	10,772-12,413	2,144-2,483	Up to 1%
HSBC Bank	9.75-16.00	10,562-12,159	2,112-2,432	Up to 2%
Federal Bank	11.49-14.49	10,994-11,762	2,199-2,352	Up to 3%
Union Bank of India	11.40-15.50	10,971-12,027	2,194-2,405	Up to 1% (Maximum Rs 7,500)
Bajaj Finserv	11.00 onwards	10,871 onwards	2,174 onwards	Upto 3.93%
Punjab & Sind Bank	11.15-12.75	10,909-11,313	2,182-2,263	Up to 1%
South Indian Bank	12.85-20.60	11,338-13,414	2,268-2,683	Up to 2%
UCO Bank	12.45-12.85	11,236-11,338	2,247-2,268	Up to 1%
IDFC First Bank	10.49 onwards	10,809 onwards	2,162 onwards	Up to 3.50%
Bank of Maharashtra	9.50-12.80	10,501-11,325	2,100-2,265	Up to 1%
Karnataka Bank	13.94	11,619	2,324	Up to 2% of loan amount (Min. Rs 2,500 & Max. Rs 8,500)
IndusInd Bank	10.49 onwards	10,744 onwards	2,149 onwards	Up to 3% Rr

Rates and charges as on March 22

Car Loans

Rates and Charges		Loan amount 5 lakh Tenure 5 years	(% of loan amount)
Name of Lender	**Interest Rate (%)**	**EMI (Rs)**	**Processing fee**
Union Bank of India	8.70 - 10.50	10,307 - 10,747	NIL
Bank of Baroda	8.70 - 12.20	10,307 - 11,173	Nil upto 31st March 2023
Canara Bank	9.15 - 11.95	10,416 - 11,110	waived off till 31st March 2023
Bank of India	8.85 - 10.85	10,343 - 10,834	NIL
UCO Bank	8.70 - 10.55	10,307 - 10,759	1% (Up to Rs 1,500)
State Bank of India	8.60 - 9.45	10,282 - 10,489	NIL
IDBI Bank	8.75 - 9.90	10,319 - 10,599	Rs 2,500
Bank of Maharashtra*	8.90 - 13.00	10,355 - 11,377	NIL
Indian Overseas Bank**	8.85 onwards	10,343 onwards	100% waiver till 31st March 2023
ICICI Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	Rs 999 - Rs 9,000
HDFC Bank	8.75 onwards	10,319 onwards	0.50% (Rs 3,500 - Rs 8,000)
Karnataka Bank	9.08 - 11.50	10,399 - 10,996	0.60% (Rs 3,000 - Rs 11,000)
Federal Bank	11.00	10,871	Rs 2,000 - Rs 4,500
Indian Bank	8.60 - 9.70	10,282 - 10,550	0.50% (Max. Rs 10,000)
South Indian Bank	11.65 - 13.10	11,034 - 11,402	1% (Max: Rs 10,000)
City Union Bank	14.25 - 14.75	11,699 - 11,829	1.25% (Min: Rs 1,000)

*0.25% interest rate concession for existing housing loan borrowers and corporate salary account holders.

**0.50% interest rate concession to borrowers with credit scores of 750 and above. Interest rate concession of 0.20% to borrowers for financing Electric 4 Wheelers. 0.20% concession to existing Housing Loan Borrowers.

Rates and charges as on March 23

A SPECIAL DAY

Neeraj pays surprise visit to students of Vishwa Vidyapeeth

It was a dream come true for children at Vishwa Vidyapeeth school in Yelahanka, a Bengaluru suburb, when Olympic javelin champion Neeraj Chopra paid a surprise visit to their classroom on Saturday. Such is Neeraj's fame that a teary eyed girl said "My idol is in front of me now." A boy cheekily asked if he was "actually Neeraj Chopra?"

RCB'S INJURY WOES

Injured Patidar may miss first half of IPL; Hazlewood doubtful

Royal Challengers Bangalore's Rajat Patidar may miss the first half of the IPL owing to a heel injury. Patidar is currently undergoing rehab at the National Cricket Academy in Bengaluru. There are also "serious doubts" over Australian pacer Josh Hazlewood's participation in the tournament as he is yet to recover from Achilles tendonitis.

DREAM DEBUT

No Haaland as Spain beats Norway; Wales draws with Croatia

Spain won 3-0 against a Norway side missing the injured Erling Haaland in the opening round of Euro 2024 qualifiers Saturday. Dani Olmo turned in Alejandro Balde's driven low cross on 13 minutes in Malaga and Joselu scored twice on his debut. Nathan Broadhead had a dream debut for Wales as he salvaged a 1-1 draw against Croatia.

EPIC BATTLE

Hurkacz saves five match-points, goes on to beat Kokkinakis

Hubert Hurkacz saved five match-points as he fought back to beat lucky-loser Thanasi Kokkinakis of Australia 6-7(10), 7-6(7), 7-6(6) in a three-and-a-half hour epic at the Miami Open on Saturday. Meanwhile, fourth-seeded Daniil Medvedev of Russia barely broke sweat in beating Roberto Carballes Baena 6-1, 6-2 in 62 minutes.

Nikhat and Lovlina add more golden sheen

Former punches her way to the 50kg title for a second straight success in an Olympic weight, while the latter picks her maiden World crown with victory in the 75kg category

Tasting success: Lovlina and Nikhat brought cheer to the Indian fans with their superb display on Sunday. SUSHIL KUMAR VERMA

BOXING WORLDS

Y.B. Sarangi
NEW DELHI

Star boxers Nikhat Zareen and Lovlina Borgohain fought with every ounce of their being as the host matched its 2006 count of four gold medals and concluded its campaign in the World women's boxing championships, at the K.D. Jadhav Hall, on a high on Sunday.

India topped the medals tally with four gold, while Brazil's Beatriz Ferreira (60kg) was named the 'best boxer.'

Nikhat, who claimed her maiden World title in 52kg last year, secured her second successive gold medal in an Olympic weight, 50kg, in front of a vociferous home crowd.

An Olympic bronze medallist in 69kg, Lovlina Borgohain achieved her target of breaking her 'bronze jinx' and settled down in 75kg ahead of the Paris Games by picking her maiden World crown.

Emulating Mary Kom

The taste of gold was sweeter for Commonwealth Games champion Nikhat, who became the second Indian woman after M.C. Mary Kom to win more than one World title. Her sixth bout turned out to be the toughest as Nikhat avenged her defeat to Vietnam's two-time Asian champion Thi Tam Ngyuen with a 5-0 verdict.

Nikhat moved in to connect body and head shots on taller southpaw Thi, who was penalised for holding, and won the first round 5-0. Thi stepped up aggression and took the second round 3-2 as Nikhat was punished for bending too much.

With standing counts on both amidst trading of punches, Nikhat gave it her all despite receiving a cut on her upper lip, which was once affected by herpes, and opened up during the bout. After being declared the winner, she knelt down to offer a prayer.

"I wanted to put every ounce of my energy and win the final," said Nikhat, dedicating her victory to the home crowd.

Asian champion Lovlina managed to pip two-time Commonwealth Games medallist Caitlin Parker 5-2 through bout review to pocket her maiden World title.

The lanky Lovlina replied to the Aussie's attacks with counters and stayed 3-2 up in the first round.

After Caitlin bagged the second round, Lovlina, boxing from a long range, made good use of her left jabs to emerge triumphant in the spectacular tussle. "I was stressed. I couldn't succeed fully in my plan, lacking in a few things. Feels good to become a World champion," said Lovlina.

The results (finals):
50kg: Nikhat Zareen bt Thi Tam Ngyuen (Vie) 5-0.
54kg: Hsiao-Wen Huang (Tpe) bt Yeni Arias (Col) 5-0.
60kg: Beatriz Ferreira (Bra) bt Paola Valdez (Col) 5-0.
66kg: Liu Yang (Chn) bt Janjaem Suwannapheng (Tha) 5-0.
75kg: Lovlina Borgohain bt Caitlin Parker (Aus) 5-2.
+81kg: Khadija Mardi (Mar) bt Lazzat Kungiebayeva (Kaz) 4-1.

Harmanpreet's Mumbai Indians lives a dream in the city of dreams

WPL

P.K. Ajith Kumar
MUMBAI

Aali Re... (She has arrived).

The women of Mumbai Indians have certainly arrived. They have not just lived up to their imaginative marketing campaign featuring that catchy song *(Aali Re...)*. They also lifted the first-ever Women's Premier League title on a pleasant Sunday night.

They did that in front of a vocal, passionate home crowd which filled the Brabourne Stadium. They chased down the modest target, set by Delhi Capitals, with seven wickets and three balls to spare.

Stars of the night: Mumbai Indians won the inaugural WPL in a thrilling final. EMMANUAL YOGINI

Sciver-Brunt's day out

MI's innings didn't have the best of starts as openers Yastika Bhatia and Hayley Matthews were dismissed inside four overs.

But Nat Sciver-Brunt (60 not out, 55b, 7x4), who has nerves of steel, played her second successive match-winning knock in a row to take her team home.

Sciver-Brunt paced her innings calmly and cleverly; so did her captain Harmanpreet Kaur (37, 39b, 5x4), as they added 72 priceless runs for the third wicket.

The finish line

Though Harmanpreet was run out, the England all-rounder continued to power the team forward and had Kiwi all-rounder Amelia Kerr (14 not out) for company.

With 21 runs needed from the last two overs, the two smashed 16 off the penultimate over bowled by Jess Jonassen. That meant only five runs were needed in Alice Capsey's final over.

Fittingly, Sciver-Brunt played the winning shot, scooping a boundary over the 'keeper.

Shikha-Radha show

Earlier, it took a stunning rearguard action by the last-wicket pair of Shikha Pandey (27 not out, 17b, 3x4, 1x6) and Radha Yadav (27 not out, 12b, 2x4, 2x6) to give Capitals something to bowl with. Their unbroken 10th wicket-stand of 52 came off just 24 balls.

Before that, captain Meg Lanning (35, 29b, 5x4) had played a fighting knock after her team got off to a poor start against hat-trick heroine Issy Wong, who took three wickets in her first two overs. But Lanning was run out and there was a dream spell of off-spin from Hayley Matthews (4-2-5-3).

Later on in the night, the dream began a reality for Mumbai Indians in this city of dreams.

SCOREBOARD

DELHI CAPITALS
Meg Lanning run out 35 *(29b, 5x4)*, Shafali Verma c Kerr b Wong 11 *(4b, 1x4, 1x6)*, Alice Capsey c Amanjot b Wong 0 *(2b)*, Jemimah Rodrigues c Matthews b Wong 9 *(8b, 2x4)*, Marizanne Kapp c Yastika b Kerr 18 *(21b, 2x4)*, Jess Jonassen c & b Matthews 2 *(11b)*, Arundhati Reddy c Saika b Kerr 0 *(5b)*, Shikha Pandey (not out) 27 *(17b, 3x4, 1x6)*, Minnu Mani st. Yastika b Matthews 1 *(9b)*, Taniya Bhatia b Matthews 0 *(2b)*, Radha Yadav (not out) 27 *(12b, 2x4, 2x6)*; Extras (lb-1): 1; Total (for nine wkts. in 20 overs): 131.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-12 (Shafali, 1.3 overs), 2-12 (Capsey, 1.5), 3-35 (Jemimah, 4.2), 4-73 (Kapp, 10.3), 5-74 (Lanning, 11.4), 6-75 (Arundhati, 12.6), 7-75 (Jonassen, 13.2), 8-79 (Minnu, 15.4), 9-79 (Taniya, 15.6).

MUMBAI INDIANS BOWLING
Sciver-Brunt 4-0-37-0, Wong 4-0-42-3, Saika 4-0-28-0, Kerr 4-0-18-2, Matthews 4-2-5-3.

MUMBAI INDIANS
Hayley Matthews c Arundhati b Jonassen 13 *(12b, 3x4)*, Yastika Bhatia c Capsey b Radha 4 *(3b, 1x4)*, Nat Sciver-Brunt (not out) 60 *(55b, 7x4)*, Harmanpreet Kaur run out 37 *(39b, 5x4)*, Amelia Kerr (not out) 14 *(8b, 2x4)*; Extras (lb-3, w-3): 6; Total (for three wkts. in 19.3 overs): 134.

FALL OF WICKETS
1-13 (Yastika, 1.3), 2-23 (Matthews, 3.4), 3-95 (Harmanpreet, 16.1).

CAPITALS BOWLING
Kapp 4-0-22-0, Radha 4-0-24-1, Jonassen 4-0-28-1, Shikha 4-0-23-0, Capsey 3.3-0-34-0.

Toss: Delhi Capitals.
PoM: Nat Sciver-Brunt.
PoS: Hayley Matthews.
Mumbai Indians won by seven wickets with three balls to spare.

Jadeja promoted to Grade A+

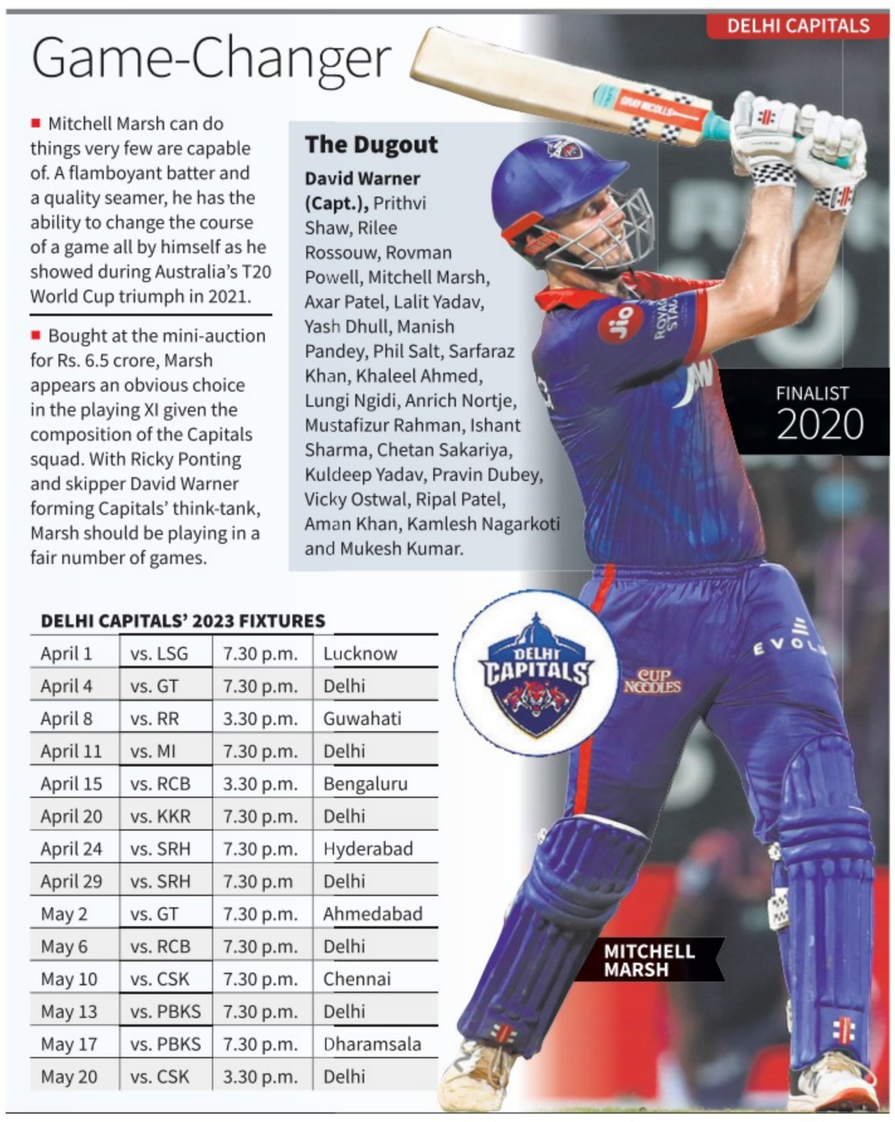
BCCI CONTRACTS

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Star all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja was rewarded with the elite Grade A+ retainership, while Axar Patel got promoted to A category as the BCCI announced the annual contracts on Sunday.

BCCI handed retainership to 26 cricketers in four groups of A+ (₹7 crore), A (₹5 crore), B (₹3 crore) and C (₹1 crore).

The contracted players:
A+: Rohit Sharma, Virat Kohli, Jasprit Bumrah, Ravindra Jadeja.
A: Hardik Pandya, R. Ashwin, Mohd. Shami, Rishabh Pant, Axar Patel.
B: Cheteshwar Pujara, K.L. Rahul, Shreyas Iyer, Mohd. Siraj, Suryakumar Yadav, Shubhman Gill.
C: Umesh yadav, Shikhar Dhawan, Shardul Thakur, Ishan Kishan, Deepak Hooda, Yuzvendra Chahal, Kuldeep Yadav, Washington Sundar, Sanju Samson, Arshdeep Singh, K.S. Bharat.


DELHI CAPITALS
Game-Changer
Mitchell Marsh can do things very few are capable of. A flamboyant batter and a quality seamer, he has the ability to change the course of a game all by himself as he showed during Australia's T20 World Cup triumph in 2021.
Bought at the mini-auction for Rs. 6.5 crore, Marsh appears an obvious choice in the playing XI given the composition of the Capitals squad. With Ricky Ponting and skipper David Warner forming Capitals' think-tank, Marsh should be playing in a fair number of games.
The Dugout
David Warner (Capt.), Prithvi Shaw, Rilee Rossouw, Rovman Powell, Mitchell Marsh, Axar Patel, Lalit Yadav, Yash Dhull, Manish Pandey, Phil Salt, Sarfaraz Khan, Khaleel Ahmed, Lungi Ngidi, Anrich Nortje, Mustafizur Rahman, Ishant Sharma, Chetan Sakariya, Kuldeep Yadav, Pravin Dubey, Vicky Ostwal, Ripal Patel, Aman Khan, Kamlesh Nagarkoti and Mukesh Kumar.
FINALIST 2020
MITCHELL MARSH

DELHI CAPITALS' 2023 FIXTURES

April 1	vs. LSG	7.30 p.m.	Lucknow
April 4	vs. GT	7.30 p.m.	Delhi
April 8	vs. RR	3.30 p.m.	Guwahati
April 11	vs. MI	7.30 p.m.	Delhi
April 15	vs. RCB	3.30 p.m.	Bengaluru
April 20	vs. KKR	7.30 p.m.	Delhi
April 24	vs. SRH	7.30 p.m.	Hyderabad
April 29	vs. SRH	7.30 p.m	Delhi
May 2	vs. GT	7.30 p.m.	Ahmedabad
May 6	vs. RCB	7.30 p.m.	Delhi
May 10	vs. CSK	7.30 p.m.	Chennai
May 13	vs. PBKS	7.30 p.m.	Delhi
May 17	vs. PBKS	7.30 p.m.	Dharamsala
May 20	vs. CSK	3.30 p.m.	Delhi

Will this be the year Delhi Capitals realises its immense potential?

IPL-16 COUNTDOWN

Rakesh Rao

Delhi Capitals remains the strongest team in the Indian Premier League that is yet to win the title. Though in recent years, after Ricky Ponting took charge as coach, the team has come close to realising its immense potential.

Clearly, the present combination looks less intimidating than the one two seasons ago but possesses a fair number of performers who can turn into match-winners.

In David Warner, the team has a captain who knows what it is like to lift the trophy. One may recall how he led from the front and top-scored in the 2016 final when Sunrisers Hyderabad triumphed.

Right now, Warner looks more determined than ever to prove a point or two. The added responsibility of captaincy (in the absence of Rishabh Pant) could well prove a blessing in disguise for this gritty performer.

Ponting's cricketing brain and Warner's resolute approach hold the promise of making it Delhi Capitals' year. The squad has a good mix of specialist batters and bowlers besides some all-rounders to provide the desired balance.

Potentially, openers Warner and the explosively-inconsistent Prithvi Shaw can send the opposition scurrying for cover not only in the first six overs but also well beyond that. On the downside, all along, the bowlers are never without hope of a breakthrough.

Overseas batters like Rilee Rossouw, Rovman Powell and handy all-rounder Mitchell Marsh are all capable of keeping up the pace set by the openers. Should Philip Salt come in for his wicketkeeping abilities, his aggressive batting could more than maintain the momentum. Besides Marsh, two other all-rounders are Axar Patel and Lalit Yadav.

Among the home-grown options, the team could consider the vastly-experienced Manish Pandey besides a bunch of young prospects.

The overseas pace bowlers look good. Anrich Nortje, Lungi Ngidi and Mustafizur Rahman join Khaleel Ahmed, seasoned Ishant Sharma, Chetan Sakariya and Mukesh Kumar. As the spin-spearhead, Kuldeep Yadav looks a certainty.

In the past few years, more often than not, the team has made the playoffs. After a hat-trick of making it to the last-four, Capitals finished fifth in 2022.

This year, the Ponting-Warner combination has a reputation to protect. Moreover, these Aussies have no dearth of motivation to give it their all.

The only chink in the armour is the absence of a regular wicketkeeper. Pant's unavailability has clearly left Ponting worried. Whether Salt or Sarfaraz can keep consistently well to the variety offered by quality bowlers like Nortje, Ngidi, Mustafizur, Kuldeep and Axar remains to be seen.

So far, Ponting has kept his cards close to the chest. He did mention that the choice of wicketkeeper would be influenced by what emerges from the practice sessions.

Need for consistency

If the past is any pointer to the future, then Capitals should seriously guard against a noticeable dip in its performance levels in the last four-five matches of the league. Once in the playoffs, it is always about small margins on a given day.

For now, Capitals' focus is firmly on winning at least eight matches in the league.

INBRIEF

S. Africa beats West Indies in highest-ever T20I run chase

South Africa set a new record for chasing in international T20 cricket when it scored 259 for four to beat West Indies by six wickets at Centurion on Sunday. Johnson Charles smashed 118 (46, 10x4, 11x6) for the visitors as they posted an imposing 258 for five, the joint sixth-highest total in T20 Internationals. However, Quinton de Kock responded with 100 (44b, 9x4, 8x6), his maiden T20 century, while fellow opener Reeza Hendricks hit 68 (28b, 11x4, 2x4). Captain Aiden Markram (38) saw his side home with seven balls to spare. The previous highest run chases were Bulgaria's 246 to beat Serbia in 2022 and Australia's 245 to prevail over New Zealand in 2018.

The scores: West Indies 258/5 in 20 overs (Mayers 51, Charles 118, Shepherd 41 n.o., Jansen 3/52) lost to South Africa 259/4 in 18.5 overs (de Kock 100, Hendricks 68, Markram 38. n.o.).
PoM: de Kock.

India gets a tricky draw for Sudirman Cup Finals

The Indian shuttlers were on Sunday handed a tricky draw in the Sudirman Cup Finals as they were placed along with Malaysia and Chinese Taipei in Group C in the global mixed team competition to be held in Suzhou, China, from May 14 to 21. Australia is the fourth team in the group.

Weightlifters bag bronze in World Youth Championships

Indian weightlifters Dhanush Loganathan and Jyoshna Sabar won bronze medals on the opening day of the IWF World Youth Championships in Durres, Albania, on Saturday. Competing in the women's 40kg event, 14-year-old Jyoshna had a combined lift of 115kg (53kg in snatch and 62kg in clean & jerk) as she came in third on Saturday night.

LIVE TELECAST

NBA: Jio Cinema App, 6 a.m.
Bangladesh vs Ireland: 1st T20I, FanCode, 1.30 p.m.
Afghanistan vs Pakistan: 3rd T20I, FanCode, 9.30 p.m.
Euro 2024 European Qualifiers: Sony Sports Ten 1, 2, 5 (SD & HD) & LIV, 12.30 a.m. (Tuesday)

Satwik and Chirag win first title of the season

Second-seeded Indian pair displays its attacking prowess to take out China's Ren and Tan in straight games

Rising to the occasion: Satwik and Chirag turned it on at the right moments to outwit Ren and Tan in the summit clash. YONEX SWISS OPEN/MARCO KUNZ

SWISS OPEN

ANI
BASEL

Commonwealth Games champions Chirag Shetty and Satwiksairaj Rankireddy defeated China's Tan Qiang and Ren Xiang Yu to clinch the men's doubles title on Sunday. The second-seeded Indian pair, ranked World No. 6. got the better of the World No. 21 Chinese pair 21-19, 24-22 to win its first title of the season.

Both the pairs entered the match with a determined attitude and were unyielding in the opening exchanges. Tan and Ren put up a strong defensive effort, including a 47-shot rally to win the fifth point, but Chirag and Satwik kept extending their lead to win the first game of the BWF Super 300 championship.

Even in the second game, there wasn't much to separate the two squads. The Indians built a three-point lead after the scores were tied at 11-11 because of Chirag's strong smashes and Satwik's precise touches. Tan and Ren launched a series of offensive strokes in an attempt to stage a comeback but the Indians held their own to take the honours in 54 minutes.

The win also continued the trend of Indians doing well at the event, with P.V. Sindhu (2022), H.S. Prannoy (2016), K. Srikanth (2015) and Saina Nehwal (2011, 2012) claiming the singles crown in the past.

Singles results (finals): Men: Koki Watanabe (Jpn) bt Chou Tien Chen (Tpe) 22-20, 18-21, 21-12.
Women: Pornpawee Chochuwong (Tha) bt Mia Blichfeldt (Den) 21-16, 21-18.

Setback for Sethuraman

DELHI INTL. OPEN

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

Top seed S.P. Sethuraman's title aspirations suffered a major blow when he dropped 1.5 points on a double-round day in the ₹45 lakh Delhi International Open chess tournament here.

Sethuraman (4.5 points) crashed to a 25-move loss with white pieces, against IM Viani Antonio D'Cunha in the sixth round.

Second seed Aravindh Chithambaram's patience paid off against Kirill Stupak as he carved out a 54-move win to join D'Cunha and Neelash Saha in the lead with six points.

Leading results: Sixth round: Kirill Stupak (FIDE, 5) lost to Aravindh Chithambaram (6); Mikheil Mchedlishvili (Geo, 5.5) drew with Luka Paichadze (Geo, 5.5); Ameya Audi (5) lost to Volodar Murzin (FIDE, 6); Boris Savchenko (FIDE, 5) lost to Neelash Saha (6); Michael Krasenkow (Pol, 5.5) drew with Mukhiddin Madaminov (Uzb, 5.5). S. P. Sethuraman (4.5) lost to Viani Antonio Dcunha (6). J. Ramakrishna (4.5) lost to Levan Pantsulaia (Geo, 5.5); Harshal Patil (4.5) lost to Mikhail Kobalia (FIDE, 5.5); G. A. Stany (4.5) lost to Goutham Krishna (5.5).
Fifth round: Almas Rakhmatullaev drew with Sethuraman; Aravindh bt S. Nitin; Kobalia drew with Erzhan Zhakshylykov (Kgz). Rupesh Jaiswal lost to Mchedlishvili; Murzin bt S. Aswath; Arjun Adireddy lost to Savchenko. Nithin Babu lost to Krasenkow; Paichadze bt Anup Deshmukh; Saha bt Vinayak Kulkarni.

Sift keeps her cool, shoots bronze in 50m 3P event

ISSF WORLD CUP

Sports Bureau
BHOPAL

Sift Kaur Samra won the bronze medal in the women's 50m rifle 3P event of the ISSF World Cup on Sunday.

Sift, 21, finished fifth in the qualification round – second among shooters not competing for ranking points only (RPO) – with a score of 588. Manini Kaushik missed out on a place in the ranking round because of lower 'inner-10s'. Olympian Anjum Moudgil dropped 11 points in Standing to finish 17th.

In the ranking round, Sift was bested by Czech Aneta Brabcova, who went on to win silver. China's Zhang Qiongyue took the gold.

In the 25m rapid fire pistol event, Vijayveer Sidhu came the closest to qualifying, among the Indians, for the ranking matches but fell short of the cut-off. He registered nine inner-10s less than Frenchman and 2022 World Championship silver medallist Clement Bessaguet.

Zhang Jueming sealed China's eighth gold of the edition, failing to hit the mark only on five occasions in the eight five-shot series. In a tight affair, Bessaguet's only miss in the final series cost him a chance to take it to a shoot-off.

India, with seven medals, is second in the table behind China (12).

The results:

50m rifle 3P: Women: 1. Zhang Qiongyue (Chn), 2. Aneta Brabcova (Cze), 3. Sift Kaur Samra (Ind).

25m rapid fire pistol: Men: 1. Zhang Jueming (Chn), 2. Clement Bessaguet (Fra), 3. Christian Reitz (Ger).

Podium show: Sift, who was fifth in the qualification round, took the third spot. A.M. FARUQUI

FIDE President saves the situation after Zhansaya's withdrawal

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

For several hours, chess took the back seat after the late withdrawal of Kazakhstan's Zhansaya Abdumalik left the host All India Chess Federation and the World Chess Federation (FIDE) facing an embarrassing situation ahead of the FIDE World women's Grand Prix here.

Peeved at not being received at the airport, Zhansaya, the 2017 World junior girls' champion, decided to withdraw from the event.

She did reach the hotel with her companion but later chose to return home.

After some players suggested cancellation of the event, FIDE president Arkady Dvorkovich stepped in, apologised and said that the event would go on as planned.

Earlier, Zhansaya claimed, "I left the tournament because the (organiser's) preparation for the event was not adequate. I arrived at the (Delhi) airport at 1.30 a.m. and they (organisers) forgot to meet me. The location of the hotel was not great. It was too much for me. We deserve to play in good conditions."

Tournament Director Bharat Singh Chauhan, while admitting that Zhansaya was not received at the airport, clarified about the hotel.

"It is the same five-star hotel where the players stayed during the second India-Australia cricket Test match (last month). The hotel has hosted several international chess events.

"Even the boxers and officials of the ongoing women's World boxing championship are staying in the same hotel. Therefore, the question of substandard conditions doesn't arise," said Chauhan.

After Zhansaya's decision to withdraw, German player Elisabeth Paehtz wrote to Dvokovich and suggested cancellation of the event.

She went on to withdraw from the tournament, reducing the field to 10 players.

Om Prakash wins maiden international title with stellar show

Ashwin Achal
BENGALURU

Om Prakash Chouhan posted a stellar seven-under 65 final round to win the Duncan Taylor Black Bull Challenge at the Karnataka Golf Association (KGA) here on Sunday. Om Prakash (20-under 268) claimed his first international title, and received ₹39,84,000.

A birdie on the 15th hole helped Om Prakash pull level with leader Ashley Chesters. A nerveless long putt on the 17th then powered Om Prakash to the sole lead.

In front of a thrilled home crowd at the 18th hole, Om Prakash sunk his birdie putt to win by two strokes. It was a tremendous effort from Om Prakash, who had started the day two shots behind the leader.

England's Chesters and Spain's Victor Pastor finished tied second in this event co-sanctioned by the European Challenge Tour and PGTI. "I definitely have plans to play on the Challenge Tour in Europe now. This win opens a lot of doors for me," Om Prakash, who hails from Mhow in Madhya Pradesh, said.

"The birdie on the 15th was the key," Om Prakash added.

Om Prakash poses with trophy. GETTY IMAGES

Om Prakash became the third Indian to win on the Challenge Tour after Gaganjeet Bhullar (won in 2011) and Shiv Kapur (won two titles in 2013). Om Prakash also equalled Udayan Mane's 2017 record (set at the Bengaluru Open) for the lowest winning total at KGA.

Aman Raj and M. Dharma finished tied-eighth and tied-21st respectively.

Top six scores: 268: Om Prakash Chouhan (70, 67, 66, 65); **270:** Ashley Chesters (Eng) (67, 68, 68, 67), Victor Pastor (Esp) (72, 64, 67, 67); **272:** Scalise Lorenzo (Ita) (68, 68, 65, 71); **273:** Rikard Karlberg (Swe) (68, 66, 69, 70); **274:** Oliver Farr (Wal) (64, 71, 70, 69), Craig Howie (Sco) (69, 69, 67, 69).

Humpy and Harika play out a draw

FIDE WOMEN'S GP

Rakesh Rao
NEW DELHI

As widely anticipated, K. Humpy and D. Harika played out a peaceful draw in 31 moves as the FIDE Women's Grand Prix chess limped off to a slow start here on Sunday.

After all the drama surrounding the withdrawal of Kazakhstan's Zhansaya Abdumalik subsided and action commenced, Germany's Elisabeth Paehtz gave a walkover to R. Vaishali, the event's lowest ranked player. She confirmed her withdrawal thereby leaving only 10 players in the field.

Since the withdrawals of Zhanasaya and Elisabeth came after the pairings were released, their rivals in each round will be given a bye, without any addition in their points tally.

Earlier, the possibility of an Indian replacement for Zhansaya was rejected by the overseas players as it would have meant a fourth Indian entry in the 12-player field.

The results: First round: K. Humpy drew with D. Harika; Polina Shuvalova (FIDE) drew with Kateryna Lagno (FIDE); Zhu Jiner (Chn) drew with Aleksandra Goryachkina (FIDE); Nana Dzagnidze (Geo) lost to Nino Batsiashvili (Geo); Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kaz), R. Vaishali-bye.

Sreeja rallies to win a thriller; Manika and Diya lose

NATIONAL TT

K. Keerthivasan
JAMMU

Sreeja Akula, the defending champion and women's second seed, was on the verge of losing her quarterfinal match but pulled off an exciting 11-6, 11-6, 6-11, 6-11, 6-11, 13-11, 11-4 win over 18-year-old Yashaswini Ghorpade in the UTT-84th senior National and inter-State table tennis championships here on Sunday.

However, earlier in the day, five of eight seeds, including top seed Manika Batra and fourth seed Diya Chitale, were not as lucky in the pre-quarterfinals.

Ayhika Mukherjee shut out Manika in a slow-paced match in six games and returned to beat Moumita Datta in five games. Incidentally, Ayhika had upset Manika last year too.

Sreeja was staring at defeat and her coach Somnath Ghosh fuming. Sreeja saved four match-points in the sixth game at 10-7 and again at 11-10 and went on to win the game. Sreeja was aggression personified in the decider as she raced away to a 7-0 lead and never looked back.

In the absence of 10-time champion Sharath Kamal, it looks like it's G. Sathiyan's crown to lose. The top seed has been rock solid and he showed it in his pre-quarterfinal win over S.F.R. Snehit and last-eight victory over Sudanshu Grover.

Sreeja Akula. FILE PHOTO

The results (quarterfinals): Men: G. Sathiyan (PSPB) bt Sudhanshu Grover (Del) 9-11, 11-2, 11-8, 11-5, 4-11, 11-6; Manav Thakkar (PSPB) bt Ankur Bhattacharjee (WB) 10-12, 11-5, 11-8, 11-5, 11-6; Harmeet Desai (PSPB) bt Ronit Bhanja (RSPB) 7-11, 12-10, 11-6, 11-8, 6-11, 11-3; Manush Shah (RBI) bt Sanil Shetty (PSPB) 11-4, 11-9, 11-6, 11-7.
Women: Ayhika Mukherjee (RBI) bt Moumita Datta (WB) 11-7, 10-12, 11-4, 11-6, 11-8; Sutirtha Mukherjee (WB) bt Mouma Das (PSPB) 11-9, 11-5, 11-5, 11-8; Archana Kamath (PSPB) bt Poymantee Baisya (WB) 11-7, 11-3, 12-10, 11-1; Sreeja Akula (RBI) bt Yashaswini Ghorpade (PSPB) 11-6, 11-6, 6-11, 6-11, 6-11, 13-11, 11-4.

Bopanna and Ebden bow out in first round

INDIANS ABROAD

Sports Bureau

Rohan Bopanna, seeded sixth with Matthew Ebden of Australia, was beaten 7-5, 4-6, [10-4] by Kevin Krawietz and Fabrice Martin in the doubles first round of the $8,800,000 ATP tennis tournament in Miami, USA.

Fresh from the title triumph in Indian Wells, it was a setback for the Indo-Aussie pair which had to be content with $18,020 and no ATP points.

In the Challenger in Les Franqueses Del Valles, Spain, third seeded Anirudh Chandrasekar and Vijay Sundar Prashanth beat the fourth seeds Purav Raja and Divij Sharan 7-5, 6-1 in the doubles final.

It was the second Challenger doubles title for Anirudh and Vijay following the one in Pune.

The results:
$8,800,000 ATP, Miami, USA
Doubles (first round): Kevin Krawietz (GEr) & Fabrice Martin (Fra) bt Rohan Bopanna & Matthew Ebden (Aus) 7-5, 4-6, [10-4].
€73,000 Challenger, Les Franqueses Del Valles, Spain
Doubles (final): Anirudh Chandrasekar & Vijay Sundar Prashanth bt Purav Raja & Divij Sharan 7-5, 6-1.

Western Australia wins Sheffield Shield again

Agence France-Presse
PERTH

A dominant Western Australia thumped Victoria by nine wickets to win a second consecutive Sheffield Shield final in Perth on Sunday on the back of a fine century by Ashton Turner. Victoria bowled the visitors out for 195 before compiling 315 with Player-of-the-Match Turner hitting 128.

WA turned the screws by bowling Victoria out again for 210 and easily chased down the 91 to win losing one wicket.

BENGALURU ROUND-UP

Young champs: The Karnataka team that took the honours in the HI junior south championship in Ramanathapuram. L. BALACHANDAR

Rithika lits 71kg youth gold medal

S. Rithika of Puducherry won gold in the 71kg youth category at the Khelo India Youth, Junior & Senior National-ranking women's weightlifting tournament being held here.

The results (winners): Senior: 71kg: Harjinder Kaur (Pun) 197kg; **64kg:** S. Nirupama Devi (RSPB) 192kg; **Youth: 71kg:** S. Rithika (Pud) 168kg; **64kg:** Tiki Mohini Mallik (Odi) 149kg; **Junior: 71kg:** Srashti (U.P.) 181kg; **64kg:** S. Pallavi (AP) 191kg.

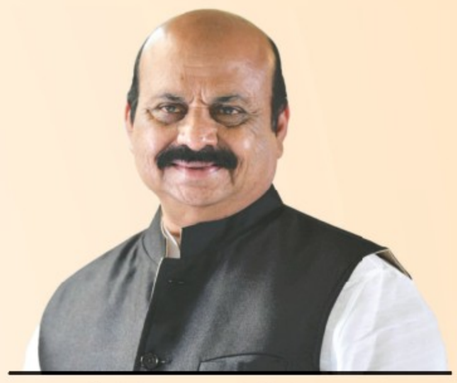
BFC girls win Bengaluru region

BFC blanked Kemp FC 3-0 to emerge the Bengaluru region winner of the Khelo India under-17 girls league, here on Sunday.

The results: BFC 3 (Rheanna Liz Jacob 3, Sasha Chawla 11, Rinsha Mariyam 32) bt Kemp FC 0; Shooterz FC 1 (Pooja Bai (OG) 32) drew with GRK FC 1 (Nabhanya 40).

Shri Narendra Modi
Hon'ble Prime Minister

Department of Health and Family Welfare



Shri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Launch of Various Health Programmes

Launch by

Dr. Mansukh L. Mandaviya
Hon'ble Union Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Chemicals & Fertilizers

In the August Presence of

Shri Basavaraj S. Bommai
Hon'ble Chief Minister

Presided by

Dr. K. Sudhakar
Hon'ble Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education

27-03-2023 • 11:30 AM • Sulalappana Dinne, Near KV Campus, BB Road, Chikkaballapur

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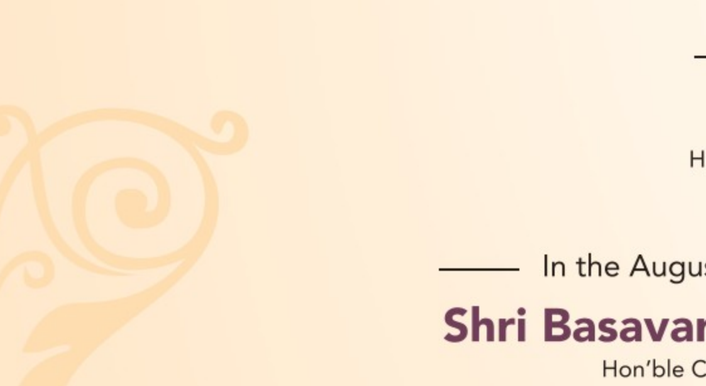

Launching 3rd phase of Namma Clinic

Namma Clinic
For providing Comprehensive Primary Health Care Services for Urban People

- One 'Namma Clinic' for every 15000-20000 population for poor, vulnerable class, slum and migrant people living in urban areas
- Provides quality and comprehensive primary health care services
- Continuum care of services through Referral services to secondary and tertiary care facilities
- Reduces out of pocket expenditure
- Decentralisation of primary health care services

A STEMI patient needs to be treated within 90 minutes of symptom onset. Every 30-minute delay thereafter results in a 50% loss of heart muscle.

Implementation of the STEMI Management model will bring about universal access to STEMI care and will result in saving lives that would otherwise have been lost.

STEMI Management Project Karnataka

(STEMI: ST Elevation Myocardial Infarction)

Partnership: Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research and Tricog Health Pvt Ltd

The STEMI care model:

- **Tertiary Hospitals: Hubs**
  (3 Jayadeva Hospitals at Bengaluru, Mysuru and Kalburagi)
- **Peripheral hospitals: Spokes**
  (10 District Hospitals and 35 Taluk Hospitals)
- **A network of ambulances for inter-facility transfer** (ALS)
- **STEMI Kit:**
  A multifunctional 12-lead ECG integrated multi-parameter monitoring unit with data entry capability is installed in the hospitals and in the ambulances connecting these.

Hon'ble Minister for Health & Family Welfare and Medical Education, Dr. K. Sudhakar attending health department programme.

Cochlear Implant Scheme
Shravana Dosha Mukhtha Karnataka

500 Cochlear Implant beneficiaries will be benefited with free investigation, hearing aid trial therapy, implant, surgery and post operative switch on therapy and 1year AVT therapy worth Rs.6.27 Lakh at completely Free of Cost.

- Severe to Profound Hearing loss children's less than 6 years will be provided with free investigations/ screening for hearing, free supply of Hearing aids, free surgery and free AVT therapy.
- In Karnataka under SAST 25 Hospitals are empanelled to provide Cochlear Implant surgery services.
- In the FY 2022-23 till Mar 2023 from Feb.2022 Totally 157 surgeries are completed and are under follow up.

"To protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife, and to have compassion for living creatures."
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M BG-BGE

I like Kohli's work ethic and passion, batting with him was just fantastic: Chris Gayle

West Indian legend recalls the competition he had with the Indian star during their heyday at Royal Challengers Bangalore

CRICKET

Press Trust of India
NEW DELHI

Swashbuckling West Indian batter Chris Gayle praised Indian batting maestro Virat Kohli for his work ethic and passion, and recalled the intense competition between the two during their heyday at Royal Challengers Bangalore.

"I like his passion and his work ethic, it's fantastic. You have to give him credit for that and he wants to show it with his performances," Gayle said.

In an episode of *My Time with Virat*, Gayle spoke about sharing the dressing room with Kohli, notching up numerous 100-run partnerships, and all the dance moves they perfected together.

"Sharing a dressing room with Virat and the other guys, once I am there, I am always jovial and having a lot of fun, dancing and everything like that," said Gayle.

"I'd show them a few moves and realise Virat's got the skills. He can move, you know. But if it's an Indian dance, Chris Gayle will win. if it's a Caribbean dance, Chris Gayle will win! One thing I remember, just to go back a bit, I remember Virat was the Orange Cap holder one particular season. I was getting runs but he was more of the guy at the time scoring a lot of runs.

"Then, bam bam, two or three games, whatever the case may be, I became the Orange Cap holder. He was like, 'man this guy just came in, bang bang bang, and became the Orange Cap holder?' It was just a funny thing that I'll always remember," Gayle said.

Virat, Virat everywhere! Kohli caught up with RCB pals Gayle and de Villiers while also sharing notes with Maxwell and Topley during the pre-season camp on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

Dress rehearsal

For the fans: Enthusiasm and excitement marked the 'RCB Unbox' as the Royal Challengers Bangalore players went around the Chinnaswamy Stadium on Sunday. K. MURALI KUMAR

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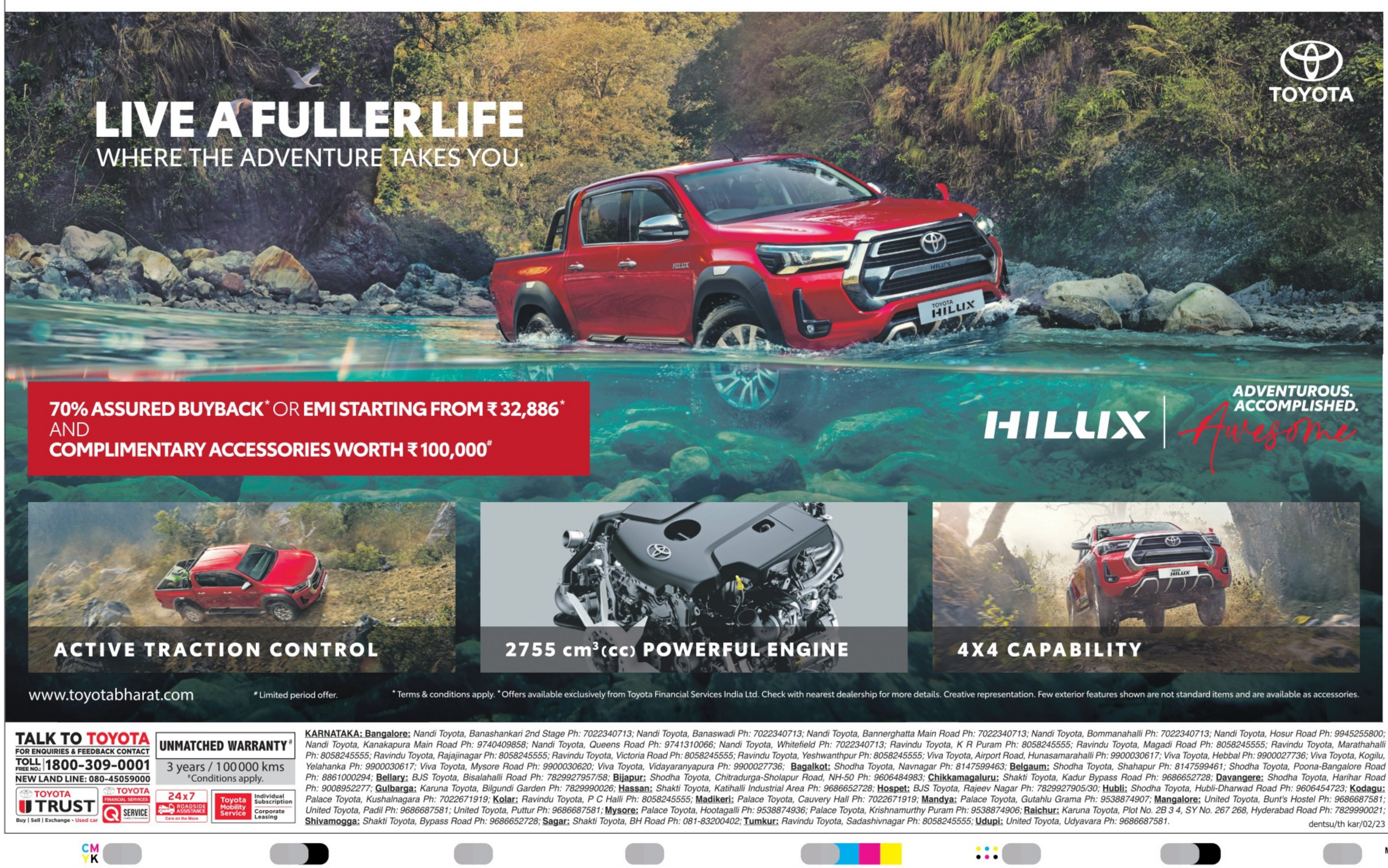
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